

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF A PILGRIM ON THE WAY TO JAGANNATHA PURI
ORISSA: ITS GEOGRAPHY, STATISTICS, HISTORY,
RELIGION AND ANTIQUITIES 1846

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Late Persian Secretary to the Bengal Government

Excerpt by Bhakta John Jagannatha

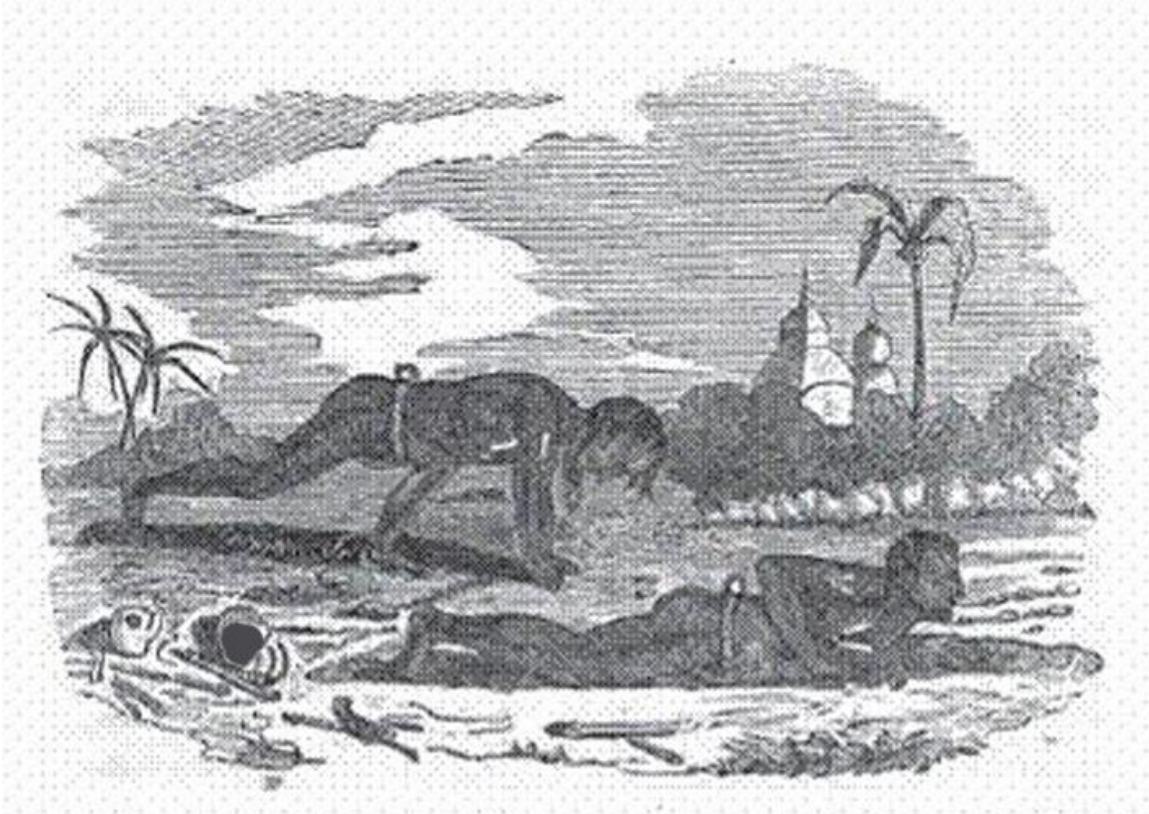


Illustration of Indian mendicants making a pilgrimage to Jagannatha Puri, 1846

With the various Ratha Yatras taking place in the boroughs of New York City in the next few weeks I would like to present a few articles on the subject of Lord Jagannatha and Jagannatha Puri in Orissa which I found in periodicals, books and encyclopedias of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The authors were all from the western countries and their descriptions were not quite devotional but quite factual and therefore noteworthy for anyone interested in the history of Lord Jagannatha and the temple in Jagannatha Puri. The spelling of the Lord's name and His paraphernalia was not always correct as the reader will see. Whatever may have been the personal motivation of the authors, the Vaisnava devotees know that the Lord is in the heart of everyone, and therefore will only see how the transcendental qualities of the Lord of the Universe shine through the mundane words of the iconoclasts. All descriptions fall short of the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in all His various incarnations. My purpose is to make available to the general audience of devotees these documents from the previous centuries to add to the strength of the factual ancient history of the Ratha Yatra, the Festival of the Chariots.

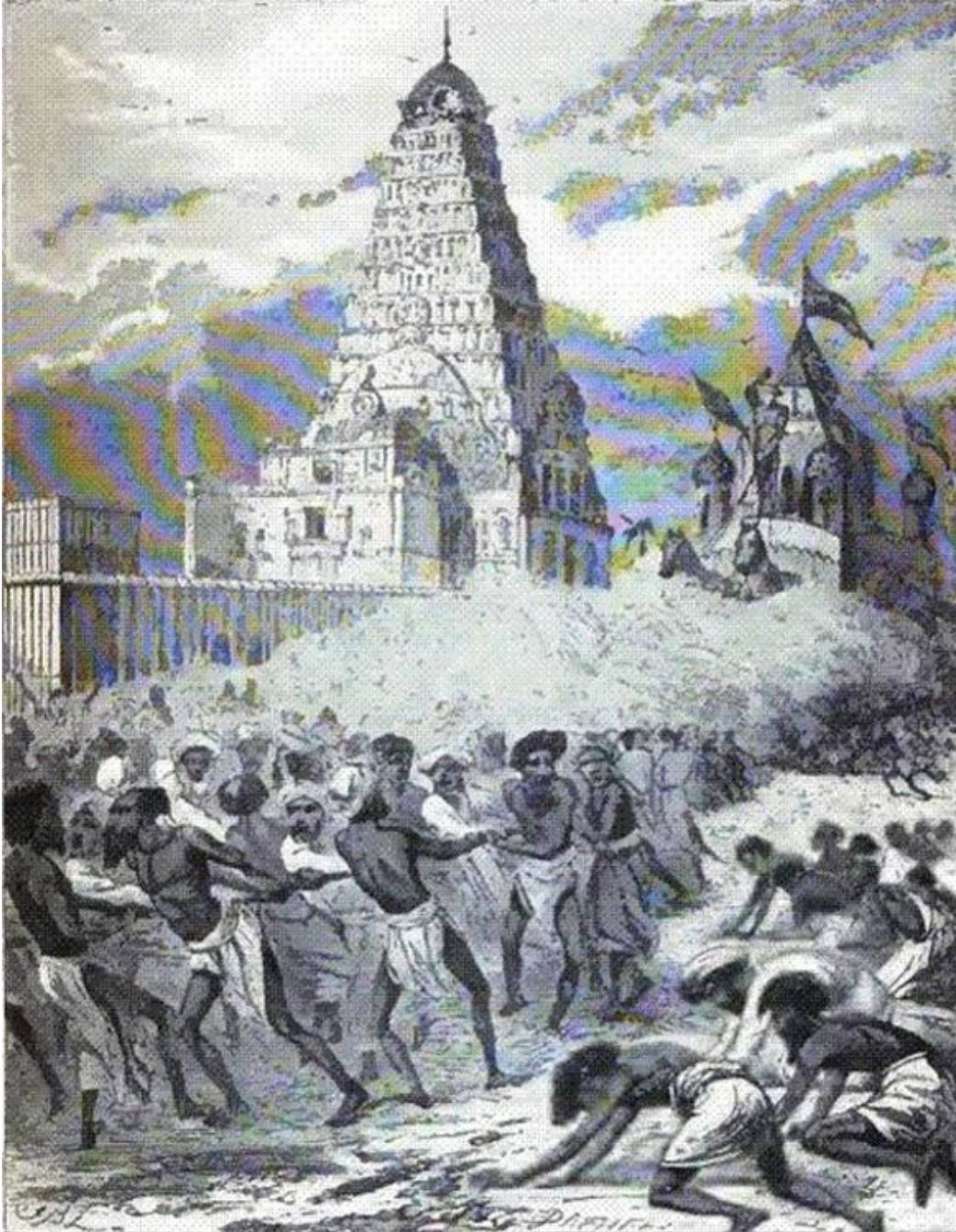
Part one:

When Dr. Buchanan visited Lord Jagannatha's temple in June 1805, he observed - "I passed a devotee laying himself down at every step, measuring the road to Lord Jagannatha by the length of his body, as a penance of merit to please his God." Mr. Lacey, some years ago, furnished an affecting account of one of these pilgrims that he beheld. "I had my attention arrested by a devotee who was measuring his way to Jagannatha's temple, by his own body, or rather by half its length: he never rose upon his feet, but only upon his knees, when on his knees he reached his hands forward, and then drew his body forward a little; every time he made this advance, he touched his forehead against the ground three times, looking towards the temple, which was now in sight.

When I got sufficiently near I called to him, but he did not appear to hear what I said, and continued on his way without paying the least attention. I succeeded in stopping him: a deep melancholy sat visible upon his countenance, his lips moving with prayer to his God, in a low tone of voice. When I had surveyed him a few moments he gave over repeating, and I began to converse with him as well as I was able. I first enquired how far he had come in that manner. He answered 750 miles. How long have you been on the way? About eight months. He appeared about twenty-one years of age, and was so emaciated by his austerities that his voice was nearly gone."

To be continued...

THE PROCESSION OF JUGGERNAUT 1870
THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MAN
BY THE REV. J.G. WOOD, M.A., F.L.S. 1870
Excerpt by Bhakta John Jagannatha



Procession of Juggernaut

The celebrated procession of Juggernaut, or Jaganatha...the great annual procession of the car...

The great temple of the idol is situated in Orissa, rather more than three hundred miles south-west from Calcutta. It is a tall, pyramidal tower, some two hundred feet in height, built of a warm red sandstone, covered with the lime-cement called "chunam." Being on the sea-coast, this tower is a most useful landmark to navigators in the Bay of Bengal.

Once in every year the great festival of Juggernaut takes place, and the huge idol-car is brought out for the procession. The car is an enormous edifice of wood, more than forty feet high, and thirty-five feet square. This mass of timber is supported on sixteen wheels, each more than six feet in diameter, some of the wheels being under the body of the car. The car itself is plentifully adorned with sculptures of the usual character, and it is conventionally supposed to be drawn by two great wooden horses, which are attached to it in readiness for the procession, and kept inside it during the rest of the year.

On the appointed day three idols are placed in the car. The central figure represents Krishna, and the others are his brother Bala Rama and his sister Subhadra. They are...enormous... Stout and long cables are attached to the car, by means of which the worshippers of the idol drag it along. The scene that takes place at the procession is most vividly described by Bruton:

"In this chariot, on their great festal days, at night, they place their...god, *Jaggarnat*; and all the *Bramins*, being in number nine thousand, attend this great idol, besides of *ashmen* and *fackeer*es (fakirs) some thousands, or more than a good many.

"The chariot is most richly adorned with most rich and costly ornaments; and the aforesaid wheels are placed very complete in a round circle, so artificially that every wheel doth its proper office without any impediment; for the chariot is aloft, and in the centre betwixt the wheels: they have also more than two thousand lights with them. And this chariot, with the idol, is also drawn with the greatest and best men of the town; and they are so greedy and eager to draw it, that whosoever, by shouldering, crowding, shoving, heaving, thrusting...can but lay a hand upon the rope, they think themselves blessed and happy..."

In former days the annual assemblage at the temple of Juggernaut, which is to the Hindoos what Mecca is to the Mahommedans, was astonishing, a million and a half of pilgrims having been considered as the average number...

...Such was the case before the English raj was established in India. Since that time a gradual but steady diminution has taken place in the number of the pilgrims to Juggernaut's temple... Formerly, the vast crowd of worshippers pressed and crowded round the cables by which the car was drawn, trying to lay but a hand upon the sacred rope. Of late years the Brahmins have found fewer and fewer devotees for this purpose...

LORD JAGANNATHA IN INDIA 1881

Excerpts from

Daily Life And Work In India

By W.J. Wilkins, circa 1881

Being a short description of the worship of Lord Jagannatha in India,
in the main temple in Puri, Orissa, and the festivals celebrated,
during the 19th century, from the point of view of a British Christian missionary.
By Bhakta John Jagannatha



THE CAR OF JAGANNATHA.

Holy Places And Pilgrims

The next place of pilgrimage is Puri, the scene of Jagannatha's worship; or if the distance is too great, as similar images with their cars are to be seen elsewhere, the people visit one of these minor shrines.

The object of a visit to Puri is to see Jagannatha, as the sight of this deity is said to have the same effect as bathing in the Ganges at Saugar. To see Jagannatha is to cleanse the soul from sin. All other temples are visited with the object of worshipping the idols; but it is to *see* Jagannatha, or rather his image, that is considered the great good.

It is not a difficult thing for the pilgrims to see the image of Jagannatha in the temples where he is worshipped, excepting at Puri, his chief shrine, of which in some respects the other places are but copies, for in the village temples the image is generally visible; but at Puri, it is almost impossible for it to be seen. The explanation is this. The sanctum in which it is kept is quite dark, the image is black, and the pilgrims are not allowed to remain long in front of it, but are hurried along by the temple officials. Before entering the promenade in front of the image, they have to walk round the building two or three times. During this walk, their attention being directed towards the high walls, the glare from the sky on the whitewashed walls is such that when the people enter the temple they can see nothing for a time, and as they pass out have to confess that they could not *see* Jagannatha, and hence their labour in coming has been thrown away. The priests declare that it is because of the enormity of their sins that the vision of the god is withheld. Many of the people having travelled many a weary mile, and spent all their savings for years, have to return without the satisfaction that the sight of this...image could give. At certain festivals the people come in tens of thousands to this place, and as the image is then fully exposed to view, they are able to catch sight of it. Many die on the journey to and fro; but there is this consolation for them - the Hindu scriptures distinctly promise that if a pilgrim sets out for Jagannatha's temple and die on the way, he secures all the benefits that would have come to him had he lived until he reached the place.

The image of Jagannatha is anything but attractive. It is an almost shapeless block of wood, with no legs, and stumps only for arms. A legend accounts for this. Centuries ago, as the worship of Vishnu - and Jagannatha is declared to be only another form of Vishnu, - had ceased in the district, a king prayed to the god to appear and re-establish his worship there. The request was acceded to: the god manifested himself to the king, and instructed him to build a temple, and promised to send the architect and builder of the gods to prepare an image, by which he could be always represented upon earth. The king, delighted with this honour, did his part; and when all was ready, Visvakarma, the divine workman, came down and began his work in an enclosure that was protected by high walls from the gaze of the multitude. Not wishing to be seen at his work, the heavenly visitor gave strict orders that he was not to be overlooked as he prepared the idol. For some days his wishes were respected; but at length the curiosity of the king overcame his discretion, and led him to get a ladder that he might have a peep at the great work in progress. But this curiosity was not passed over: the angry deity returned to heaven, leaving the image in its unfinished state. The king was greatly disappointed at first as he saw the shapeless block of wood, but was reassured by Vishnu that, notwithstanding its ugliness, it should still be regarded

as his representative. To this day, whenever the idols are renewed at Puri, this ugly model is followed. On the festival days of Jagannatha, gold or silver hands are fixed to the stumps of arms.

Such is the common story. But a more correct view of this worship is that when the Buddhists were driven out of India and their temples destroyed, as their teaching had taken a firm hold of the hearts of many of the people, who were not, however, prepared to give up home and country for its sake, this modified form of Hinduism was adopted in its place; the image of Jagannatha, the lord of the world, being only a modification of certain symbols that were usually found in the Buddhist temples. In the worship of Jagannatha, there are many things very similar indeed to the Buddhistic creed and practice; and it is known that Orissa was for some time the head-quarters of Buddhism.

It is a very noticeable thing that at Puri, Hindus of all castes eat together. In the presence of the god, the caste distinctions that are elsewhere so carefully observed that many would die rather than neglect them, are at the feasts within the temple enclosure quite forgotten; and the high and low caste people may be seen partaking together of the rice that has been sanctified by being cooked in this holy place, which to many of the people is the most sacred upon earth.

Ugly, repulsive indeed as the image of Jagannatha is, the deity whom it is supposed to represent was of all the Hindu gods one of the gentlest, and one to whom gods and men are said to have resorted for aid in their times of special need. It is Vishnu the Preserver, not Siva the Destroyer, that is represented; and yet, by some strange error, he is spoken of as the Moloch of India, as one who delights in human blood. Of all the gods in the Hindu Pantheon, Vishnu is *the* one to whom all life is sacred. The followers of Vishnu regard it as sinful to take life even when the victim is sacrificed to Kali. It may be that the ugly image that is worshipped may have led English people to regard him as cruel; or it may be the accidents that have frequently attended his worship may have given rise to this idea. It is perfectly true that not a year passes by without some people being crushed to death under the wheels of the ponderous cars on which the image is dragged from one temple to another; but it is equally true that it is not because the Hindu scriptures teach that such sacrifices are pleasing to this deity. It is also true that occasionally men have voluntarily cast themselves under these wheels; but it is because they are weary of life, and imagining that their sins are removed, and fearing lest on their return to ordinary life they should again do evil, they think that it is well to put an end to it at such a holy place. Deaths, mostly accidental, but occasionally voluntary, do occur in connection with the worship of this deity; but the character of the deity represented, and the ordinary worship of his followers, are all opposed to such a course - life in its simplest form being regarded as a most sacred thing by them.

Religious Festivals

The Jagannatha festivals are three in number, there being an interval of about a fortnight between the first and second, and between the second and third.

1. The Snan Jatra, or Bathing Festival.

Puri, a town on the sea-coast of Orissa, is the head-quarters of this worship. Year by year over a hundred thousand pilgrims set out from their homes to be present at this festival; but, owing to the exposure and privations of the journey, hundreds perish by the way in going or returning. The expenses of travelling to and living at Puri are so great, that some die of starvation on the return journey, whilst many beg their food as they travel. As, however, there are images of the deity in many places, and the ritual at Puri is carefully followed, those who cannot undertake the long journey to Orissa content themselves with a visit to a village nearer home where the festivals are observed.

The Snan Jatra is a festival in which the idol is bathed in public. On a high platform, around which from eighty to a hundred thousand people are assembled, the priests go through the ceremony of bathing the image of the Lord of the world. As the ceremony proceeds there is the greatest solemnity amongst the crowd of spectators; but when the signal is given that it is completed, the cry of "Jai, jai, Jagannatha!" ("Victory, victory to Jagannatha!"), bursts forth with such fullness of sound that it can never be forgotten. Of all the ceremonies of Hinduism that I have seen, this is by far the most impressive. As soon as the bathing of the image is over, the people wander amongst the stalls, and business and pleasure rule the day.

The exposure during the bath is supposed to give fever to the god, so for a fortnight the temple doors are closed. During this time, as the image has become discoloured owing to the flowers, water, etc., that have been thrown upon it in the course of the year, it receives a fresh coat of paint; so that, when it is brought to view at the Car Festival, it is resplendent in its new colours.

2. The Rath Jatra, or Car Festival.

As it is supposed that the fever has weakened the deity, fourteen days after his bath the image is taken from the temple, hauled upon a ponderous car and dragged to the temple of some other god, with whom it remains for a fortnight for change of air. I should mention that Jagannatha is generally attended by images of his brother, Balarama, and his sister, Subhadra. These cars are made after one model, though varying in size according to the wealth and taste of their owners. They have sixteen wheels of solid wood, and some of the cars are as high as two or three-storied houses. To these cars thick cables are attached, and thousands of the people gladly assist in hauling, as it is said that heavenly rewards await those who lay hold of the rope. At Puri a number of villagers receive their lands rent free on condition that they help in dragging the car; whilst the prince of the district rejoices in the title of "Sweeper of the temple of Jagannatha."

The cars have remained in place for a year, and there being no means of guiding them, when they begin to move they go with a rush: it is in this manner that accidents occur, although there are large numbers of police in attendance to keep the road clear. Any one seeing the ceremony, and witnessing the excitement of the crowd, would not wonder that occasionally some of the people should be crushed to death. But as was said before, the crushing of people is not a recognized part of the ceremony, nor is there anything in the character of the god to lead the people to imagine that sacrifice of a human life would be acceptable to him; his worship tends rather to its preservation than to its destruction.

3. The Ulta Rath, or Return of the Car.

This festival is not by any means so popular as the others and attracts far fewer people. After a visit of a fortnight, the image is again placed upon the car and taken back to its own temple; but it often happens that men have to be paid before they assist in pulling the car on its homeward journey.

End of excerpts from Daily Life and Work in India.

THE LORD OF THE WORLD
AMERICAN MAGAZINE
VOLUME XIV, JULY TO DECEMBER, 1882
BY WILLIAM SIMPSON
Excerpt by Bhakta John Jagannatha



Illustration of the Gateway of the Temple of Jagannatha at Puri, 1882

Lord Jagannatha and Jagannatha Puri in the 19th and early 20th century, Part 2:

The subject of this article is to be that of "Juggernaut"; but as that form of writing the word is now obsolete, it would scarcely do as a title; and the newer form of "Jagannatha" is so different, and as yet so little known, few would have recognized in it the name of the celebrated deification which has been so long notorious.

Jagannatha is the form in which the word is now given by the best authorities; Jagan means "World," and Natha is usually rendered as "Lord," and thus we have "The Lord of the World," these words giving in English the title of the well-known divinity of Orissa.

Puri is situated about fifty miles south of Cuttack, where there is a level delta formed by the Mahanaddi River, and the space contains a most interesting collection of archaeological remains. The Buddhist caves at Udayagiri and Khandagiri are among the oldest rock-cut excavations in India; and the temples of Bhuvaneswara and Kanaruc are, from their age as well as the elaborate work upon them, one of the most remarkable groups of Brahminical architecture. The great temple at Puri belongs to the same group.

The temple inclosure is very nearly square, being 665 feet by 644, a space agreeing very closely with that of the temple courts of Jerusalem, according to Josephus; within this is a second inclosure, 400 by 278 feet. In addition to the great temple of Jagannatha itself, there are a number of lesser temples, and other buildings for purposes connected with the worship, among which are a dancing-hall, a refectory and a kitchen. This last is a large and very important part of Jagannatha's establishments. There are numerous wells, among which is the Rohini-Kunda; and a sacred tree, a banyan or *Ficus Indica*, called "Kalpabriksha," which possesses many virtues, and is a source of revenue to the Brahmins. The Baradand, or road on which the cars are moved along at the Ratha Yatra, is a wide space extending about two miles to the northeast. The town surrounds the temple and extends along this road, and has a population of over 20,000, which are nearly all Hindoos. The high sanctity of the spot is attested by the Skanda Purana, where Narayana, or Vishnu, is made to say to Brahma:

"On the northern shore of the sea, to the south of the Mahanadi River, there is my favorite abode. Alone it can confer all blessings which are derivable from all other sacred places on the earth put together. Those wise sons of Manu who dwell there enjoy the fruits of all the good deeds performed by them in their previous births. Know this, Lotus-born, that none who is of little merit or wanting in faith can dwell there. Every step of the land from the Mango Forest to the shore of the southern sea is most precious, as I shall show you. The blue hill, which flourishes on the seashore, is the most secret place on earth - most difficultly accessible even to you. Enveloped by my illusion it remains unknown even to the gods and demons. Forsaking all company, I dwell there in a corporeal form. Rising above all mutability and eternity I abide at Purushottama, the holy spot, which is alike unassailable by creation and destruction. Even as you see me here in corporeal shape, with all my emblems, so will you, Brahma, see me there. On that blue hill, to the west of the Kalpa fig-tree, there is a fountain known under the name of Rohina; dwelling near it, men may behold me with their carnal eyes, and, washing off their sins with its water, attain equality with me."

According to the "Purushottama Mahatmya," Puri was a forest with the blue hill in its centre. Here was the Rohini-Kunda, or fountain, and the Kalpa-tree, and an image of Vishnu in blue and sapphire, a dark-blue being the color in which that god is always represented.

We may take it that the fountain, which still exists, was the first cause of the spot becoming sacred. It will be found that almost every holy place has a source of water connected with it. Every sacred spring did not become a Jerusalem, a Mecca, a Benares, or a Puri; but these places would never have been known had there been no source of water at them. Indradyumna, a king of the Solar race who reigned at Avanti, in Central India, heard of the great fame of the blue god, and wishing to see and worship this divinity, he left his kingdom with a large army. On reaching Puri the blue stone had disappeared, and Indradyumna was in despair. As a mark of his devotion he erected a splendid temple, and held a great festival at its consecration, accompanied with the most elaborate sacrifices. During the ceremonies the king had a dream in which a tree appeared to him, and in the tree was Vishnu with all his emblems.

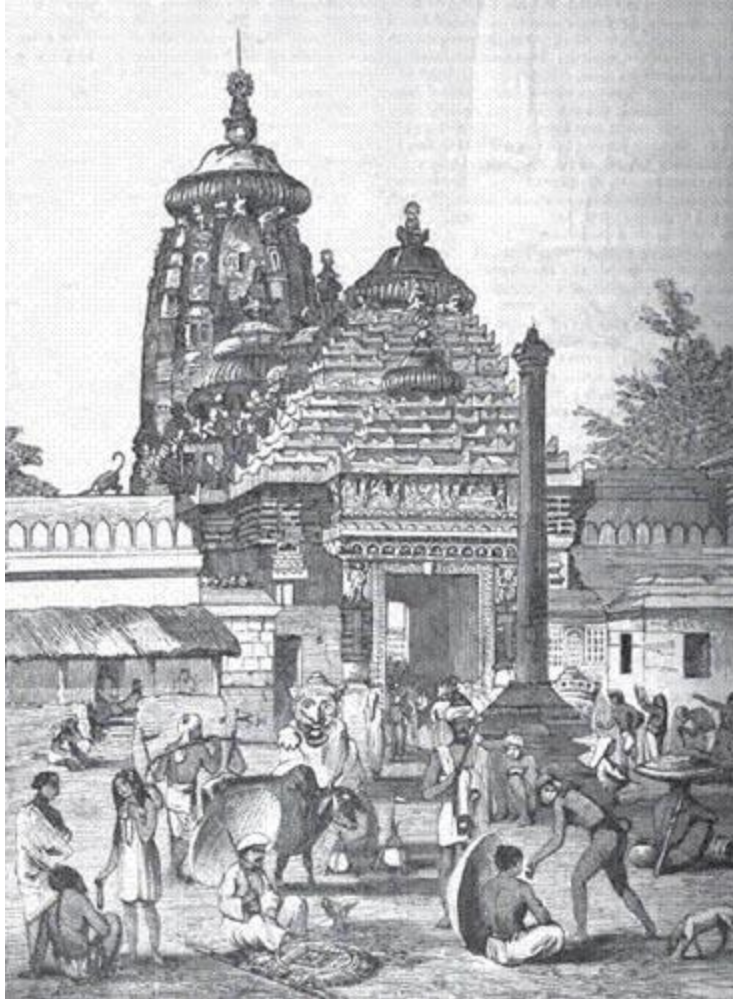


Illustration of a general view of the Temple of Jagannatha, 1882

Along with the god was his wife Lakshmi in her most benign aspect; and also the Sudarsana-Chakra, or celestial wheel. This vision was looked upon as a good omen, and at the end of the ceremonies a log floated ashore with the emblems of Vishnu upon it. This was explained to be a hair from the body of the god, and that it had come from Sweta-Dwipa, or the "White Island." From this log the first images of Jagannatha, Balarama, Subhadra and the Sudarsana-Chakra were made.

The form in which these images have been made will now be considered. The representations of them here given are from a work lately published under the authority of the Government of India, entitled "The Antiquities of Orissa". It is in two large volumes, most elaborately illustrated with lithographs, photo-lithographs, and wood engravings. the author is Rajendralala Mitra, who is not only learned in the antiquities of India, but at the same time being a Vaishnavite Brahmin, had access to the Temple of Jagannatha, a privilege not allowed to Europeans; and I here acknowledge my indebtedness to that work, from which I have freely taken while writing this article.

The images are those of Jagannatha; of Balarama, also called Balabhadra, the elder brother of Krishna; Jagannatha being the same as Krishna, he is known as his brother; Subhadra is the sister of Jagannatha. These three figures, as well as the Sudarsana-Chakra, are placed on the Ratnavedi, or jeweled altar, in the principal shrine of the temple. Jagannatha is colored blue, that being the color of Vishnu and Krishna; Balarama is white, and Subhadra is yellow, and the so-called Chakra is of a checked pattern. They are large figures, Jagannatha and his brother being about six feet high, and the sister is about four feet; the Chakra is also about six feet.

The form of these images has led to attempts to account for their shape. There is a curious legend, that when Indradyumna got the log, Viswakarma, the architect of the gods, appeared and offered to carve the figures in fourteen days, during which he was to be locked up in the temple, and no one was to disturb him till the task was accomplished. The impatience of the king was too great, so before the appointed time he caused the doors to be opened. Viswakarma had gone, and nothing was found but the images, which according to this story, are in an unfinished state, the sculptor having disappeared before the hands and feet had been made.

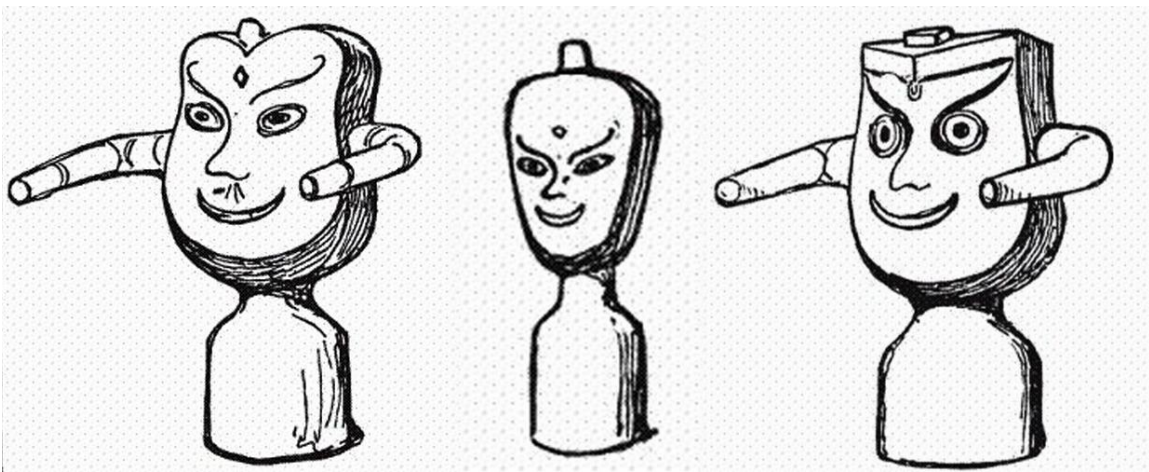


Illustration of the Deities of Jagannatha, Baladeva and Lady Subhadra, 1882

The images are made from the wood of the Nim tree, and they are renewed at certain intervals of time. It is generally supposed that new images are made every twelve years; and two Hindoos from Puri, who told me this, said that a dream comes to the chief Brahmin as to where the wood will be found. The last time the renewal took place the wood was procured near Kalicot, in the Ganjam district. According to Rajendralala Mitra the time of renewal is regulated partly by astrological calculations. The astronomical aspect which bears on the date is the occurrence of two moons in the month Ashadha.

A very sacred object is preserved in one of the images; but what this is, no one seems to know. Even Rajendralala Mitra, although a Vaisnavite Hindoo, is unable to speak with certainty; he declares this something to be "the mystery of mysteries in Orissa." According to one account, it is a bit of the log which first came floating on the sea to Indradyumna; another, says it is a fragment of the original image; some say it is a box with quicksilver, which is considered to be the spirit which is removed from the old to the

new image. My two Hindoo friends told me it was a Salagram stone, and that it was placed in the breast of the figure.

The Sudarsana Chakra is a wooden post about six feet high, and its surface is carved with a check pattern. The word chakra means a wheel, and the priests say there is one marked on the top of this sacred post. The discus or quoit of Vishnu, is also called a chakra.

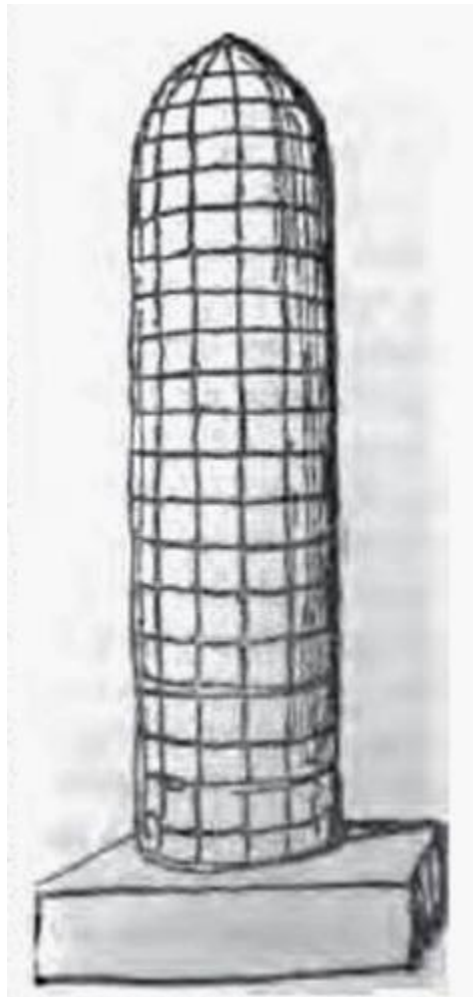


Illustration of Sudarsana Chakra, 1882

At Puri, Jagannatha is not only a god, but he is treated as if he were a living personage. With his brother and sister enthroned in a magnificent temple, which becomes a palace, they are as royal monarchs who receive the devotion of the people, and are attended by the priests as their officers and servants. At early dawn they are awakened by the ringing of bells; when the temple door is opened they are saluted in Oriental fashion; ablutions are performed; a ceremony is gone through which means that they are washed. At a particular hour Ballabha Bhoga or the slight breakfast is served. Then comes a substantial breakfast. At midday the principal meal is spread out before the gods. After this a siesta is indulged in, from which they are awakened by the sounds of sweet music and the turning

of lights, which is called Arati. After this comes more bathing, dressing, eating, and the turning of lights, and other ceremonies, ending in supper; and about eleven at night bedsteads are brought in, when the divine personages are requested to retire to rest for the night. To this ought to be added ritual mantras or the utterance of words in a particular form adapted to each period of the day. There is also music and dancing, and a corps of Nautch girls is specially kept for the purpose. These persons are supposed to be of respectable character, and Rajendralala Mitra gives the case of Mira Bai, daughter of Surya, Rana of Jeypur, who became one, and devoted herself to the service of Rangchhodji. We have the curious statement given that these ladies are "formally married to the divinity of the temple, to which they remain attached for ever."

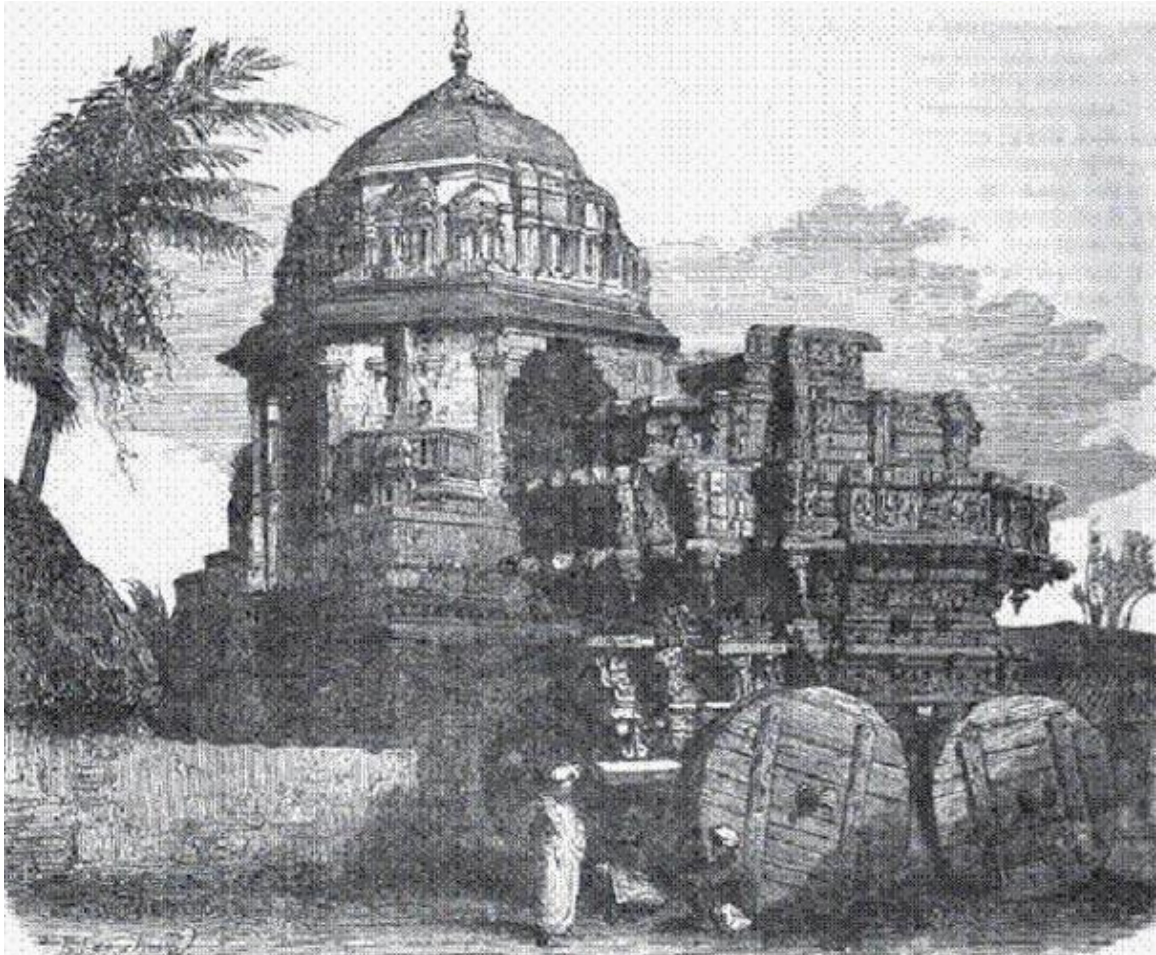


Illustration of part of an ancient car of Jagannatha, preserved near the Temple, 1882

The Rath Yatra, or Car Festival of Jagannatha, is not confined to Puri; Jagannatha has temples in other places. Wherever the Lord of the World has temples, the Rath Yatra is celebrated. In the south of India there are few places where the cars will not be found, and they are generally highly ornamented with carved figures. There are three cars at Puri, one for each of the idols. They are very large and heavy; by means of bamboos and colored cloth a high Sikra or tower is formed, about fifty feet in height. The tower is in shape the same as the steeple surmounting the sanctum of a Hindoo temple, thus making the car, in reality, a movable temple on wheels. The images are brought out of the temple,

and after the images are placed in the cars, they are richly appareled, and golden hands and feet are added to them. The Rajah of Khurda appears with a grand Sowarie of horses, elephants and followers. He is the hereditary sweeper of the temple; barefooted, and with a jeweled broom he sweeps the ground and worships the images, presenting flowers and incense. He then takes the ropes of each car successively, and pretends to drag them, but there are 4,200 persons also pulling at the ropes; these persons are a special class kept for this purpose, having lands, rent free, in some neighboring villages. In addition to these are the crowd of pilgrims all anxious to get a pull at the ropes, and by thus serving "Jagannathjee" to "rend asunder the bonds of sin for ever." The cars move irregularly, and their progress is but slow, to the Gundicha Gurh, which is a temple in a garden. The return journey is often still slower than the other, for the greater portion of the pilgrims departs, and there is often a want of power to drag the cars along. When they get back to the great temple, a ceremony is gone through, and when this has been performed, the Daityas carry the images into the temple, and the ceremonies are at an end.

What might be called the Restaurant Department of the Temple at Puri ought to receive some short notice before closing this article. Jagannatha and his relatives, breakfast, dine and sup; this part of the ceremonial is managed by placing large quantities of food in the hall of offering, called the Bhoga Mandapa, one of the halls in front of the sanctuary, and by opening a door the divinities can see them from their throne. The Rajah of Khurda, who has already been mentioned, has a number of special rights; one of them being that he sends particular kinds of food, which is taken into the sanctuary; this is sold to the pilgrims, and the money is credited to the Rajah. All the food brought in is sold, the proceeds going to the priests and the temple fund. The amount of food which has to be cooked is very large, so much so that a new and larger kitchen had to be added to the establishment, and the cooks are busy at work from three or four in the morning till ten or eleven at night.

The above is but a slight sketch of what takes place, but it gives the more important details. The Car Festival of Jagannatha is a rite which has, at least, descended from a very remote period. We can see that it is a very important relic of far past ages.

To be continued...

A DESCRIPTION OF LORD JAGANATH
THE CYCLOPAEDIA OF INDIA AND OF
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN ASIA VOLUME 2 1885
BY SURGEON GENERAL EDWARD BALFOUR
Excerpt by Bhakta John Jagannatha



Illustration of Festival of the Chariots in Jagannatha Puri, Orissa, 19th Century

Lord Jagannatha and Jagannatha Puri in the 19th and early 20th century, Part 3:

JAGANATH, Jaganatha, vernacularly Jugurnath, from Yoganatha, lord of the world, is a name now especially applied to Vishnu in the form in which he is worshipped at the temple of Jaganath at Puri in Orissa. All the land within 20 miles round this pagoda is considered holy, but the most sacred spot is an area of about 650 feet square, which contains fifty temples. The most conspicuous of these is a lofty tower about 184 feet in height and about 28 feet square inside, called the Bur Dewali, in which the idol and his brother and sister Subhadra are lodged. Adjoining this are two pyramidal buildings. In one, about 40 feet square, the idol is worshipped, and in the other the food prepared for the pilgrims is distributed.

The temple was restored in its present form in A.D. 1198 by Raja Bhim Deo of Orissa, at an outlay of 500,000 pounds sterling. It is in a square enclosed by a high stone wall, 250 yards each face, with the principal gateway on the eastern side. The walls are covered with statues. The grand entrance is on the eastern side, and close to the outer wall stands an elegant stone column, 35 feet in height, the shaft of which is formed of a single block of basalt, presenting sixteen sides. The pedestal is richly ornamented. The column

is surrounded by a finely-sculptured statue of Hanuman, the monkey chief to the Ramayana.

The establishment of priests and others belonging to the temples has been stated to consist of 3900 families, for whom the daily provision is enormous. The holy food is presented to the idol three times a day. His meal lasts about an hour, during which time the dancing girls, the Deva-dasa, belonging to the temple, exhibit their professional skill in an adjoining building. Twelve festivals are celebrated during the year, the principal of which is the Rat'h Jatra.

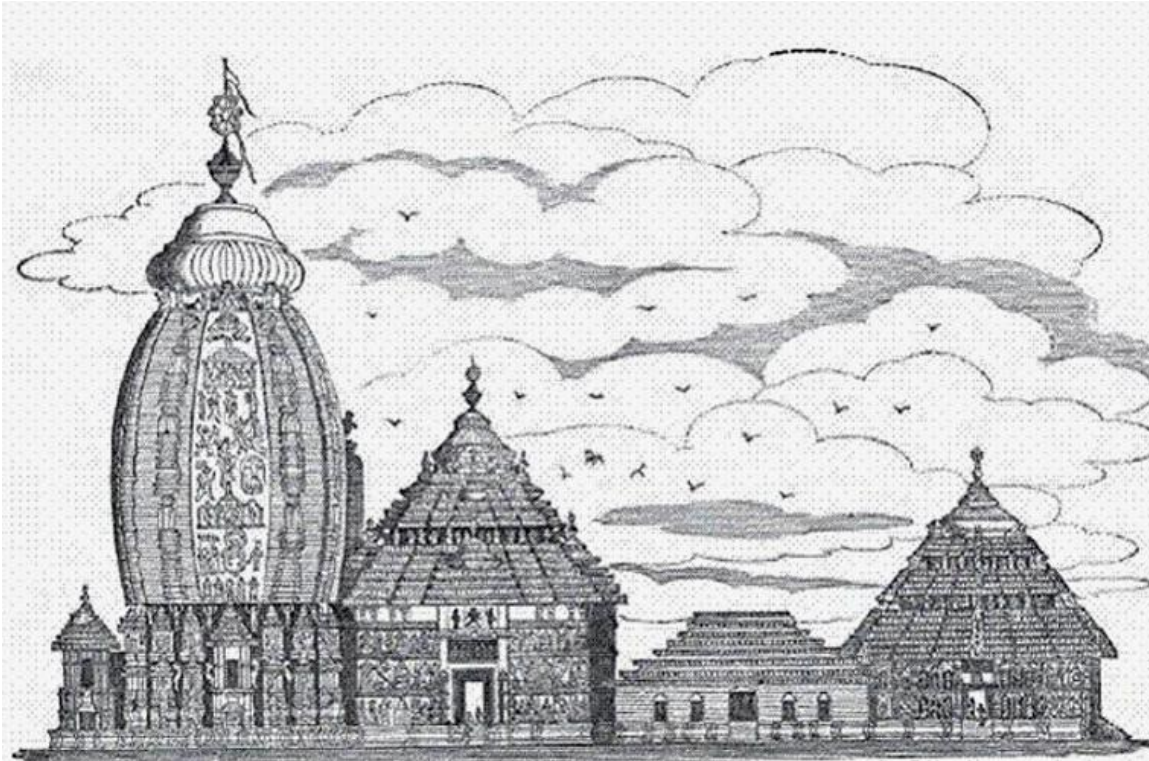


Illustration of the Temple of Jagannatha in Orissa on the Bay of Bengal, 19th Century

In the early years of the 19th century many statements were made as to the self-sacrifice of pilgrims by throwing themselves beneath the wheels. But self-immolation is entirely opposed to the worship of Jaganath, and the rare deaths at the car festival were almost always accidental, though there have doubtless been instances of pilgrims throwing themselves under the wheels in a frenzy of religious excitement. Any death within the temple of Jaganath renders the place unclean. The ritual suddenly stops, and the polluted offerings are hurried away from the sight of the offended god. According to Chaitanya, the Orissa apostle of Jaganath, the destruction of the least of God's creatures is a sin against the Creator. Self-slaughter he would have regarded with abhorrence.

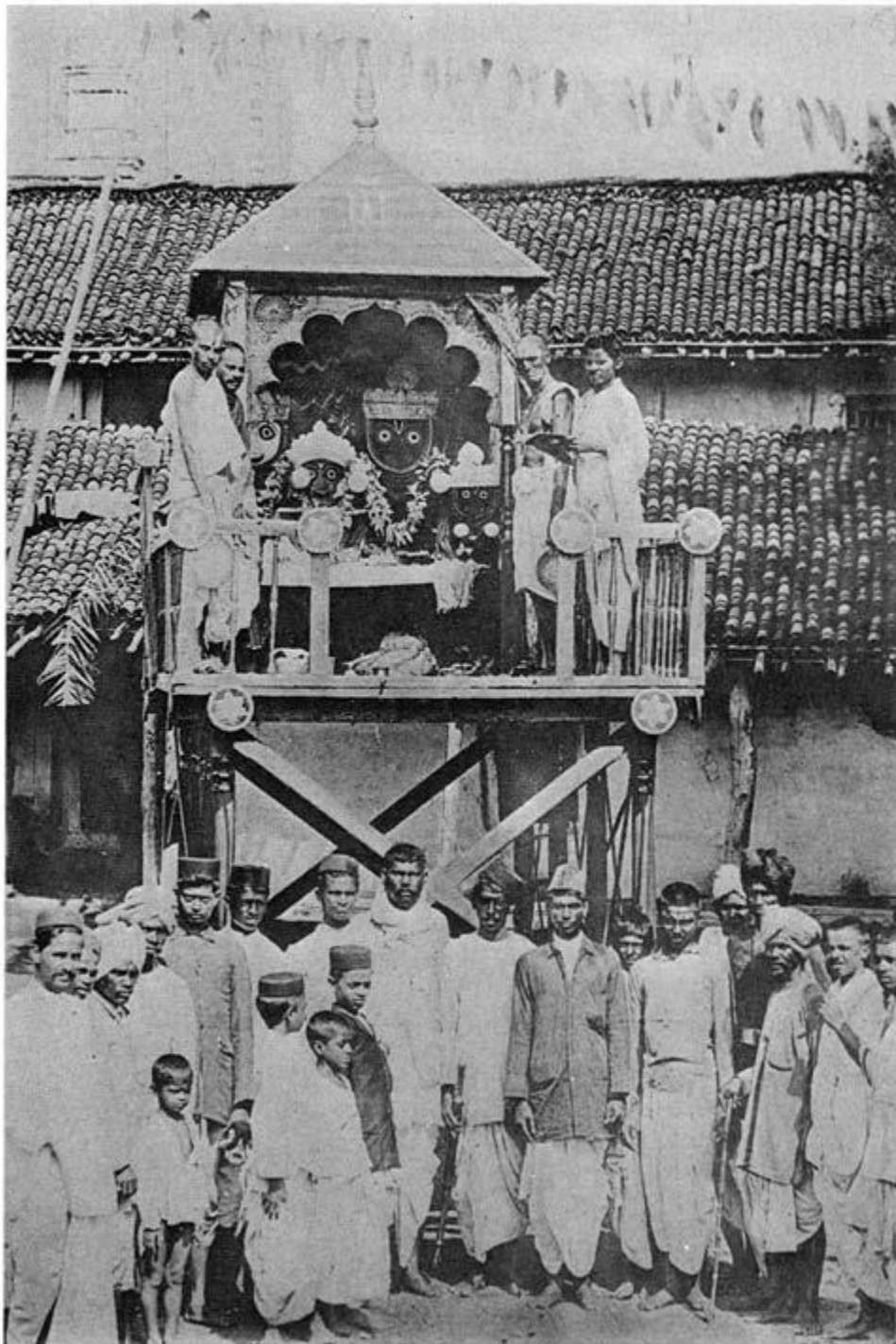
The image of the god is (made) of wood, and his arms, which, as he was formed without any, have been given to him by the priests, are of gold. He is gorgeously dressed, as are also the other two idols which accompany him. In a compartment in the temple of Rama, he is represented in company with Bala Rama and Subhadra, without arms or legs. The

temple is built on a low sandy plain about 1 1/2 miles from the shore. The car is painted with figures.

In the festivals at this Hindu temple the images brought forward are those of Krishna, his brother Bala Rama and sister Subhadra. Multitudes of pilgrims resort thither, especially at the two great festivals of the Snana Yatra and Ratha Yatra, in the months of Jyaishtha and Ashadba. In the Snana Yatra, the image is bathed; in the Ratha Yatra, or car festival, it is brought out upon a car, with images of Bala Rama and Subhadra, and is drawn by devotees. Jaganath temple has three prominent classes of servants, - the Parcha or head priests, who superintend the collection and disbursement of the revenues, and see that the worship is conducted in an orderly manner; the Parharri, who dwell within the holy land of the temple, guard the seven inner doors of the pagoda, attend during the day and watch over it at night, and present pilgrims to the idol; and the Panda, who serve chiefly in the pagoda.

To be continued...

HOLIDAYS OF LORD JAGANNATHA IN PURI, ORISSA 1914
By bhakta John Jagannatha



A rural village Ratha Yatra in Southern India circa 1916.

EXCERPTS FROM
AN ALPHABETICAL LIST OF THE FEASTS AND HOLIDAYS
OF THE HINDUS AND MUHAMMADANS
IMPERIAL RECORD DEPARTMENT
CALCUTTA: SUPERINTENDENT GOVERNMENT PRINTING, INDIA
EDITED BY DENISON ROSS 1914

SNANA YATRA

[SNANA = BATHING, THE BATHING FESTIVAL OF JAGANNATHA.]

The Snana Yatra or the bathing ceremony in Jaistha (May-June) ushers in the great festival, the Ratha Yatra, which occurs 17 days later. On the Snana Yatra day, *i.e.*, the full moon of Jaistha, the images of Jagannatha, Valabhadra and Subhadra are taken out of the sanctuary at Puri and placed on a lofty platform near the wall where they can be seen from the street below. Here they are bathed with 108 pitchers of water taken from a well near the northern gateway, which is used on this day alone. The bathing ceremony should take place before sunrise. This festival is the anniversary of the day when the divinity, Jagannatha, descended on earth. Like the Ratha Yatra this is also a festival observed wherever Jagannatha is worshipped.

RATHA YATRA

[RATHA = CAR, AND YATRA = A JOURNEY.]

This festival takes place on the second day in the bright fortnight [*The fortnight ending with the full moon is known as the bright fortnight.*] of Asarha (June-July). This is one of the greatest festivals of the Hindus. Of all the festivals of the year held at Puri the greatest is Ratha Yatra or Car festival which commemorates the journey of Krsna from Gokula to Mathura. According to Hindu mythology the ninth (? eighth) incarnation of Visnu was the eighth son of Vasudeva and his wife. It had been predicted that a son of theirs would kill Kamsa, the demon king of Mathura, who typified the principle of evil. Kamsa therefore imprisoned Vasudeva and his wife and slew their first six sons; Valarama, the seventh, was extracted from Devaki's womb and transferred to that of Rohini, another wife of Vasudeva, and so saved. On the birth of Krsna the father escaped from Mathura with the child and crossing the Jamuna entrusted the infant Krsna to the care of the herdsman king, Nanda of Vraja. In Gokula or Vraja Krsna grew up to manhood. At length Kamsa heard of him and sent a messenger to bring him and his brother to Mathura, where Krsna killed Kamsa. This episode in the life of Krsna is commemorated by the Ratha Yatra. It is stated in the Gita that God becomes incarnate in the various ages (*yugas*) to uphold righteousness and to destroy evil. One of the causes of God's becoming incarnate in the manifestation known as Sri Krsna is believed to have been the killing of Kamsa. This seems to be one of the reasons why so much importance is attached to this episode. On this occasion the images of Jagannatha, Valabhadra and Subhadra are removed from the temple of Jagannatha at Puri and taken in great chariots to the garden house (*Gundicha-bari*) along the Baradanda road, which is about a mile and a half long. Here the gods remain in the car at night and are taken out next morning and placed in the

shrine. They remain there for a week and are again put up in the cars and taken back to the temples, thus commemorating the return journey of Krsna. It is believed that he who obtains a sight of Jagannatha at this time (*i.e.*, during the Ratha Yatra) is saved from the misery of re-births. It is observed in Bengal, Kashmir, the Mahratta country and Orissa. In Southern India the day is known as Bhadr Dvitiya. Outside of Puri the Ratha Yatra at Ballabhpur and Mahesh is very well known.

PUNARYATRA OR ULTARATHA YATRA

This ceremony, which is a part of the Ratha Yatra festival, takes place on the tenth day of the waxing moon in the month of Asarha (June-July) when the ratha or car on which Jagannatha is taken out on the day of the Ratha Yatra, begins its return journey. This festival commemorates the return of Krsna and Valarama from Mathura whither they had gone at the invitation of Kamsa, the demon king of the place. Being anxious to kill Krsna, whom he regarded as his mortal enemy, Kamsa sent the brothers an invitation; but Krsna knowing his motive killed him instead. This festival marks the end of the Ratha Yatra festival. The rule is that the whole festival should last nine days, but usually it lasts much longer, the return journey taking many days at Puri. Although the whole of the Ratha Yatra festival is essentially *the* festival of Orissa, it is not local, wherever Sri Krsna or Jagannatha is worshipped the great festival with its ceremonials is observed much in the same way as at Puri. Although this festival forms a part of the Ratha Yatra it is considered sufficiently important by itself to deserve separate notice.

THE CAR OF JUGGERNAUT
INDIA'S GREAT RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL AS SEEN BY A EUROPEAN
THE LIVING AGE, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST, 1929
BY F. YEATS-BROWN
Excerpt by Bhakta John Jagannatha



Jagannatha Puri Ratha Yatra Early 20th Century

Lord Jagannatha and Jagannatha Puri in the 19th and early 20th century, conclusion:

For uncounted centuries Jaganath has been the symbol of the oldest living faith and the adored of millions. A hundred devadasis dance in his honor. He has a score of elephants to attend him. The revenue of his temple is kingly, and he has two locked cellars which are knee-deep in jewels. When he rides in his car, on his day of days, escorted by his brother Balarama and sister Subhadra, surrounded by his priests and worshiped by his people, he goes on such a tide of human love and faith as we in the West may never see.

Love and faith are miracles whether they inform single minds or multitudes. But the thing which passes unseen at the altar or in some hand clasp becomes so visible and so vivid when it takes place at Puri simultaneously in the minds and hearts of two hundred thousand people, that it stuns the senses. One can only stammer about it. Some day psychologists may be able to explain how the pandars (*ascetic mendicants of Southern India*) influence the crowd; how the priests, elephants, flowers, bugles, and beat combine into a single emotional complex. As for me, I shall only try to take a morning out of my life and put it into a page of print, without analysis.

We are at the Lion Gate, then, in the Temple Square of Puri, in a roped-off inclosure containing privileged spectators and the cars of Jaganath, Subhadra, and Balarama. The cars are cottages on wheels, several stories high, beflagged and betinseled, with a central room for the god. On the front platform sit gilt idols of the drivers, with elbows and wrists in regular coaching style. Ropes thick as a man's wrist lie coiled below the cars, to each of which will be harnessed a thousand pilgrims. The car of Jaganath has three such traces, the others two. Outside our enclosure - where we stand with priests, pundits, retinues of rajahs, police officials, and the Temple manager - squat the concourse of the people of Brahma. Only the pandars remain erect, fanning their flock with fly-whisks, sprinkling it with holy water, explaining to it proceedings, for many of the pilgrims are strangers from far places.

Jaganath, Lord of the World, symbol of the Godhead, soon will emerge from the shrine where he has lived for ages, on his yearly pilgrimage to his consort, Lakshmi, at the Garden Temple four miles away.

Already there is a stir at the Lion Gate, for the sister of the Lord of the World is coming. The pandars tell the pilgrims, and the pilgrims lift up their voices. The pandars join hands in worship. The pilgrims join theirs. The pandars sprinkle and fan the squatting hosts and there is a seething and a crying. The voice of the crowd is like the purr of a tremendous tiger. The palanquin of Subhadra arrives on the shoulders of a hundred priests, preceded by another hundred walking backwards.

Two hours pass. The square is packed to suffocation. The sun peeps in and out, raising the temperature to 100 degrees, and then blanketing us in clouds. Balarama has come, but still the Lord of the World delays.

Now at last the backward-moving priests appear for the third time, and with them come elephants like castles on a checkerboard of bronze bodies and white clothes, and waving white chowris, and wild braceleted arms. Jaganath has a peacock fan bigger than the Pope's, and his conchs are stranger than the silver trumpets of Saint Peter's. A throng seems to be fighting round him. The sun blazes over pandemonium. The ropes are broken. Hot bodies surge by me and over me to the car of Jaganath. Priests and pandars try to beat them down with rolls of matting, but good-humoredly, for this always happens. The people will not be denied touch with the deity.

Through these ecstasies and agonies Jaganath is borne to his seat. With each step taken the peacock plumes come forward. Through the tumult one can hear a rhythm, as if the fan kept time to a chant. Jaganath is ready to go where Lakshmi waits.

Now an odd thing happens. A British police officer, sweating and disheveled in his khaki, appears before the car. His duty is to see that the god reaches the garden of his desire. It is a ticklish business, for Jaganath is so holy that he cannot be moved backward, even an inch. Should his car take a slant across the square and butt against a house, the house must come down.

The Superintendent of Police directs with a whistle. A thousand men are clustered on each rope. When the Superintendent sounds a blast they take the strain, and the traces stretch and stretch, like pieces of elastic. Slowly, smoothly, the sixteen wheels revolve. Everywhere between them, above, below, on every side, men and women and children are clinging and crying and trampling and fainting. A glimpse of Jaganath is fertility to the barren, heart's ease to the sad, sons and kine (*cows*) to the householder.



Jagannatha Puri Ratha Yatra Early 20th Century

Nearby, a temple elephant, with forehead of gold and the red eye of Siva painted on it, stands very thoughtfully. He has seen this show a hundred times. Pilgrims salute him, touching his trappings of cloth of gold and then their foreheads. They give him money, putting annas and even rupees into his trunk, which he swings up lazily to a mahout (*driver*) almost as blase as himself. Not quite, however, for the mahout has only seen the show fifty times.

The crowd is mad with delight. Showers of marigold, jasmine, and money fall on the car. The elephant sways on his soft feet and blinks, not cynically, but with a very wistful wonder. The life of India flows by him, turbid, frenzied, yet wrapped in its own inscrutable mysteries. Why does it grovel before Jaganath? The elephant seems to share my feelings. Neither he nor I know how it is that the blind have been made to see by Jaganath, and the dumb to speak.

Do you doubt it? If you have seen these people of Puri and caught a little of the spirit of that far-off shore, you will know that wonders still walk this earth. Everything is possible here, but comprehension is not easy for those whose nurture has been different, whose climate is kind, and whose traditions are concerned with conquest of races or environment.

The Indian, like our early saints, is interested, not in machines, but in the souls of men. In his mind germinated bhakti marga, whose light rejoiced all Christendom when it passed through the crystal of Saint Francis. It was an Indian also (Sankara) whose principles of meditation must surely have inspired Loyola. To-day we are further from the ages of faith, but it would be the commonest of vulgar errors to believe that guns and engines have won us a moral as well as material superiority over "simpler" minds. The two cultures have much to give each other, but to bridge the gap between them will require an imagination that can stretch like the ropes of Jaganath's car.

The end.

Although this is the fourth and concluding part of this short series on Lord Jagannatha in Jagannatha Puri, Orissa, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, by the mercy of Guru and Gauranga, and by the mercy of Lord Jagannatha, Lord Baladeva and Lady Subhadra, I hope to present more articles in the future.

**JAYA JAGANNATHA! JAYA BALADEVA! JAYA SUBHADRA!
SRI JAGANNATHA RATHA YATRA KI JAYA!
JAGANNATHA PURI DHAMA KI JAYA!**

COLLATERAL DISCOVERIES PART ONE

By Bhakta John Jagannatha

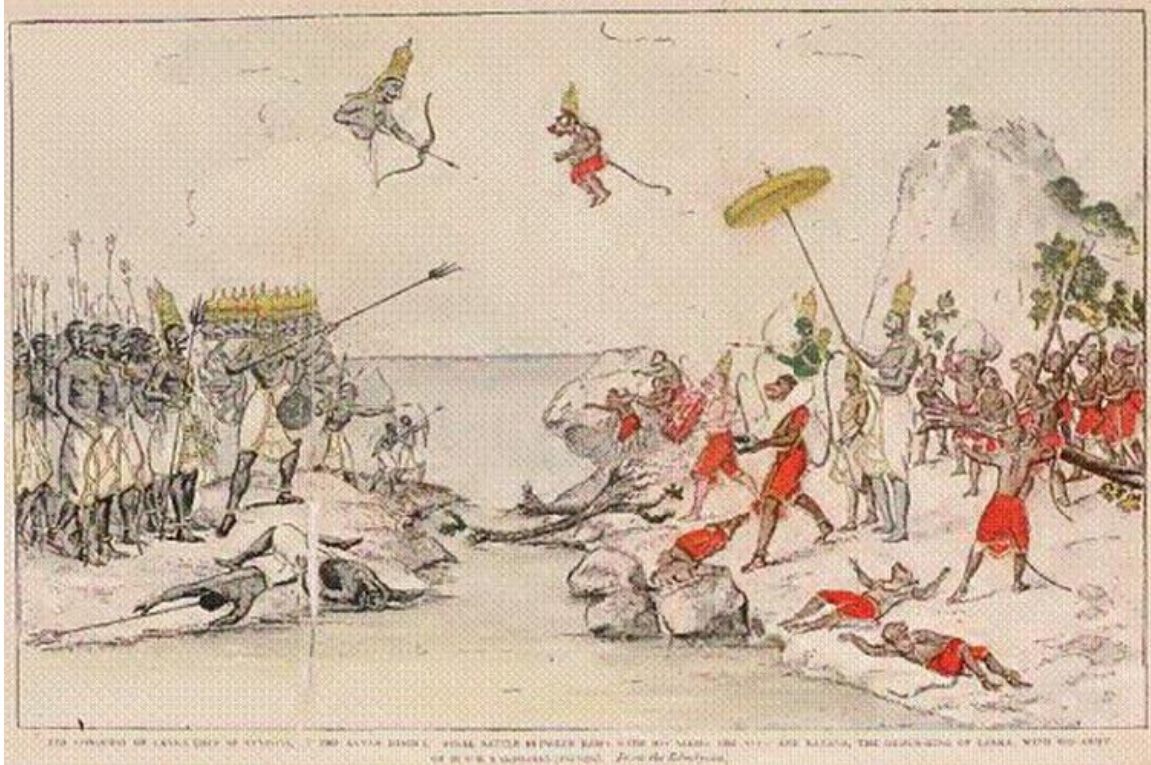
While looking for all things Jagannatha and Jagannatha Puri in the books on India of the western world in the previous centuries, there were many photos and illustrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, in His many forms, which were collaterally discovered. In addition there were also many artistic and photographic depictions of the demigods and the devotees and their activities and I would like to present them for the pleasure of the Vaisnavas.

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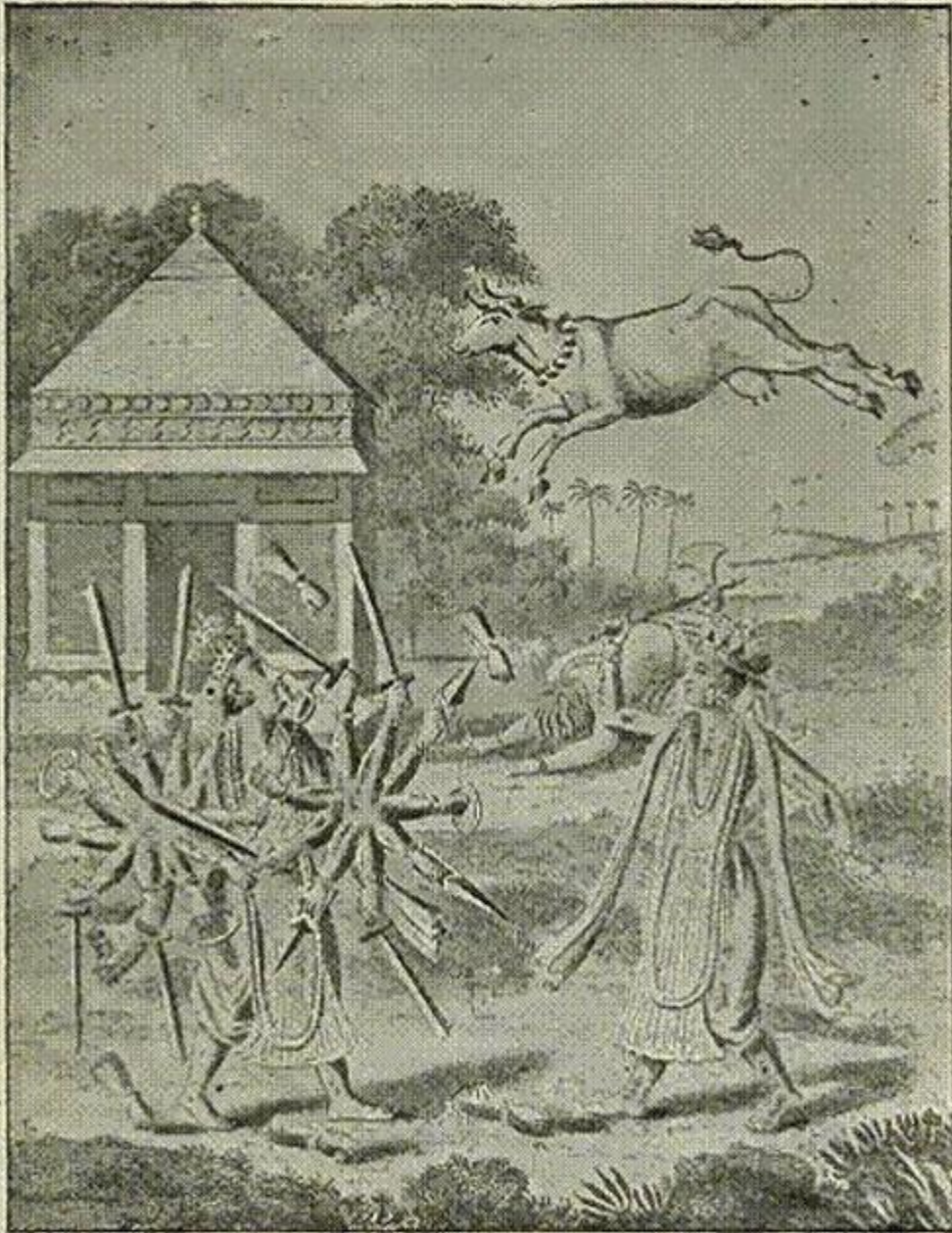
Let us start with art and photos of Krishna presented in order of date.



The Footprints of Vishnu 1896



The Conquest of Lanka, by the Aryan Hindus, (from the Ramayana) 1902



18.—THE SIXTH AVATĀR (OR VISHNU INCARNATE AS PARASHU-RĀMA,
THE EXTERMINATOR OF THE KSHATRIYAS).¹

¹The cow is Vasishtha's sacred and miraculous cow, the emblem
of Brahmanic prayer and sacrifice.



Image of Krishna as Murlidhar, or the flute-player, with attendant deities, 1916

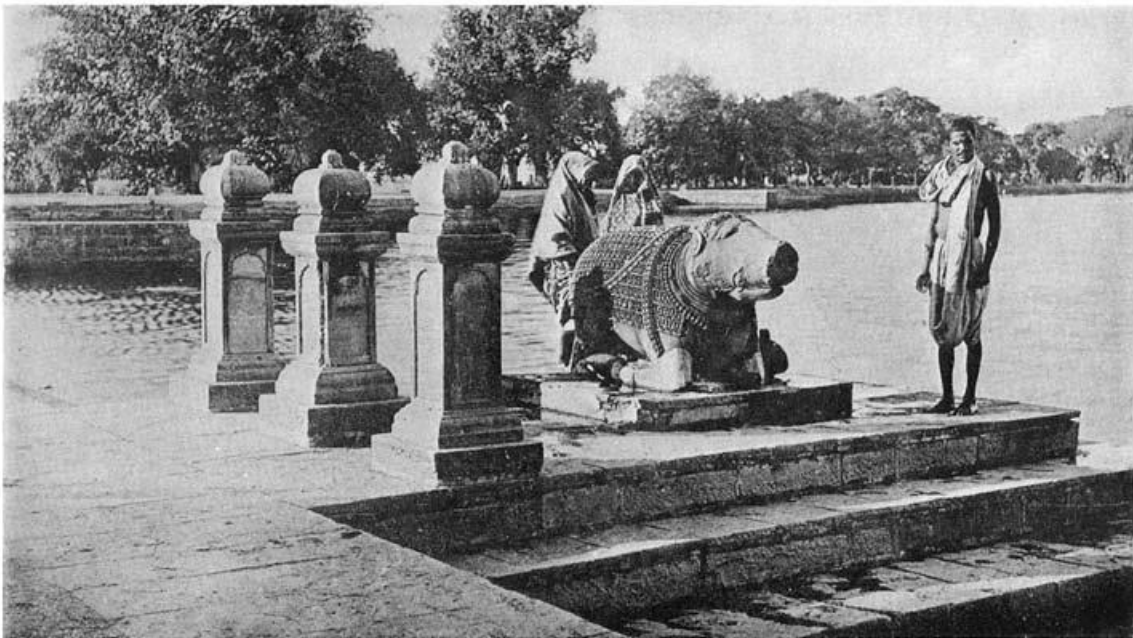


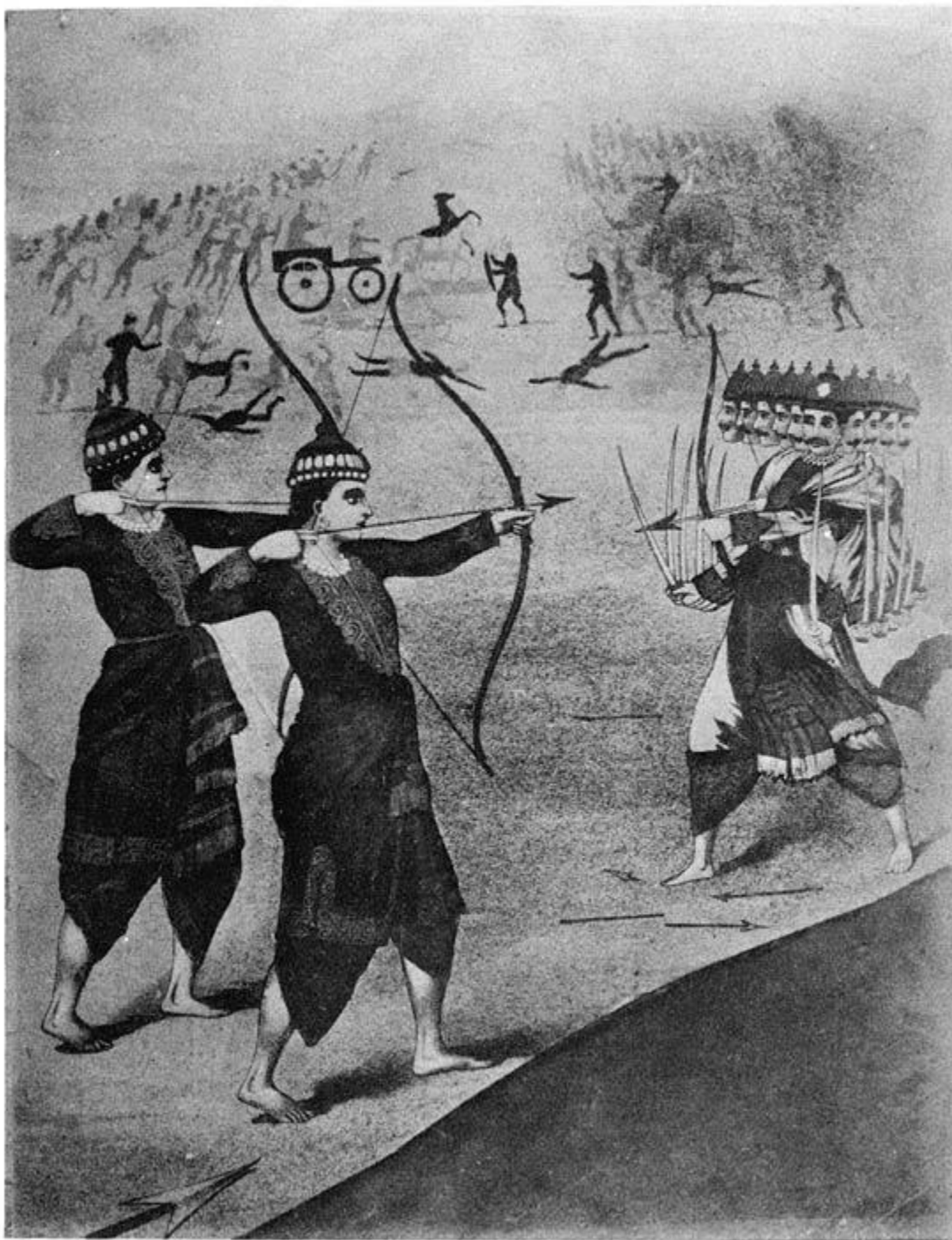
Image of the Boar Incarnation of Vishnu, 1916



Image of the god Vishnu as Vitobha, 1916



Images of Rama, Lachman and Sita, with attendants, 1916



The killing of Ravana, the demon king of Ceylon, 1916



The god Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu, with attendant deities, 1916

In conclusion of part one let us also include –

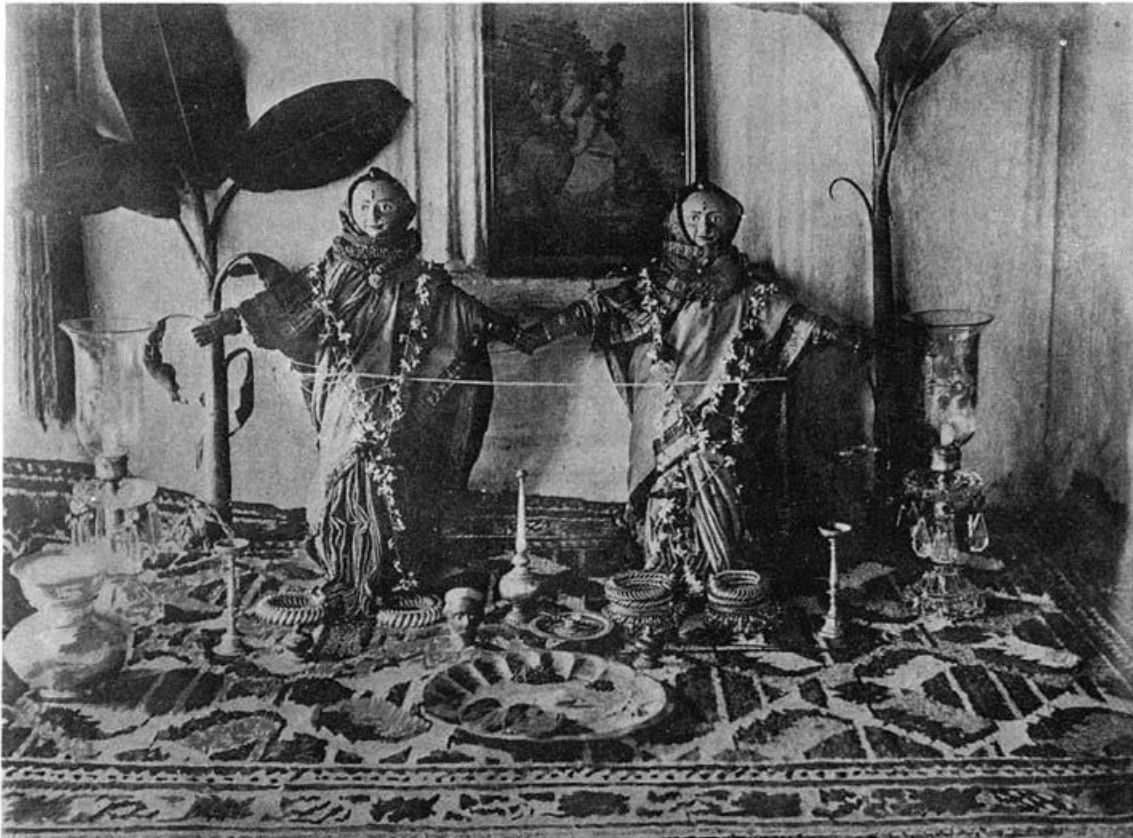


Image of Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, the consort of Vishnu, with attendant, 1916



Gayatri or sacred verse personified as a goddess, 1926

COLLATERAL DISCOVERIES PART TWO

By Bhakta John Jagannatha

In part two, I would like to present images found of Demigods.

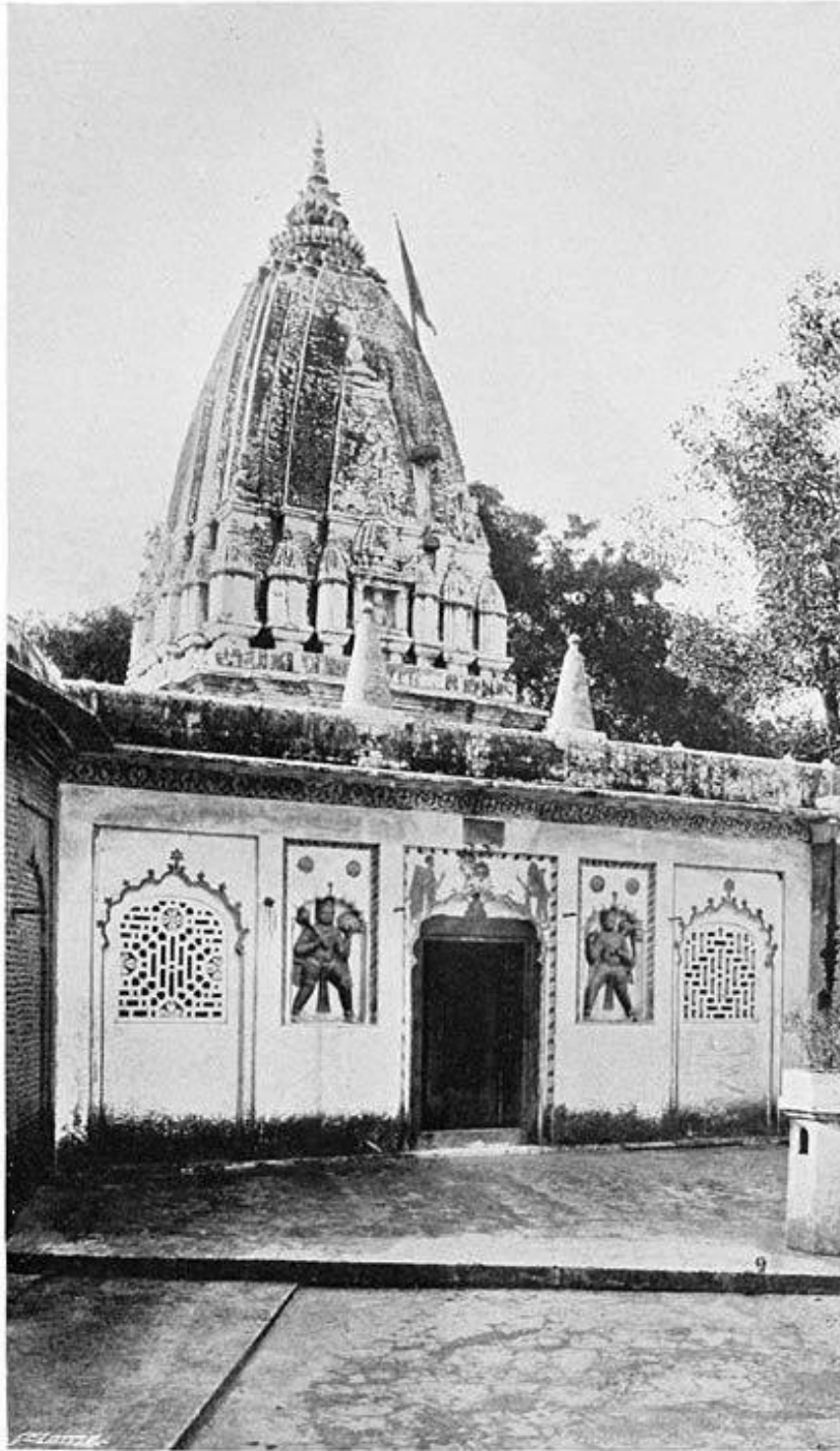
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Ganesa 1896



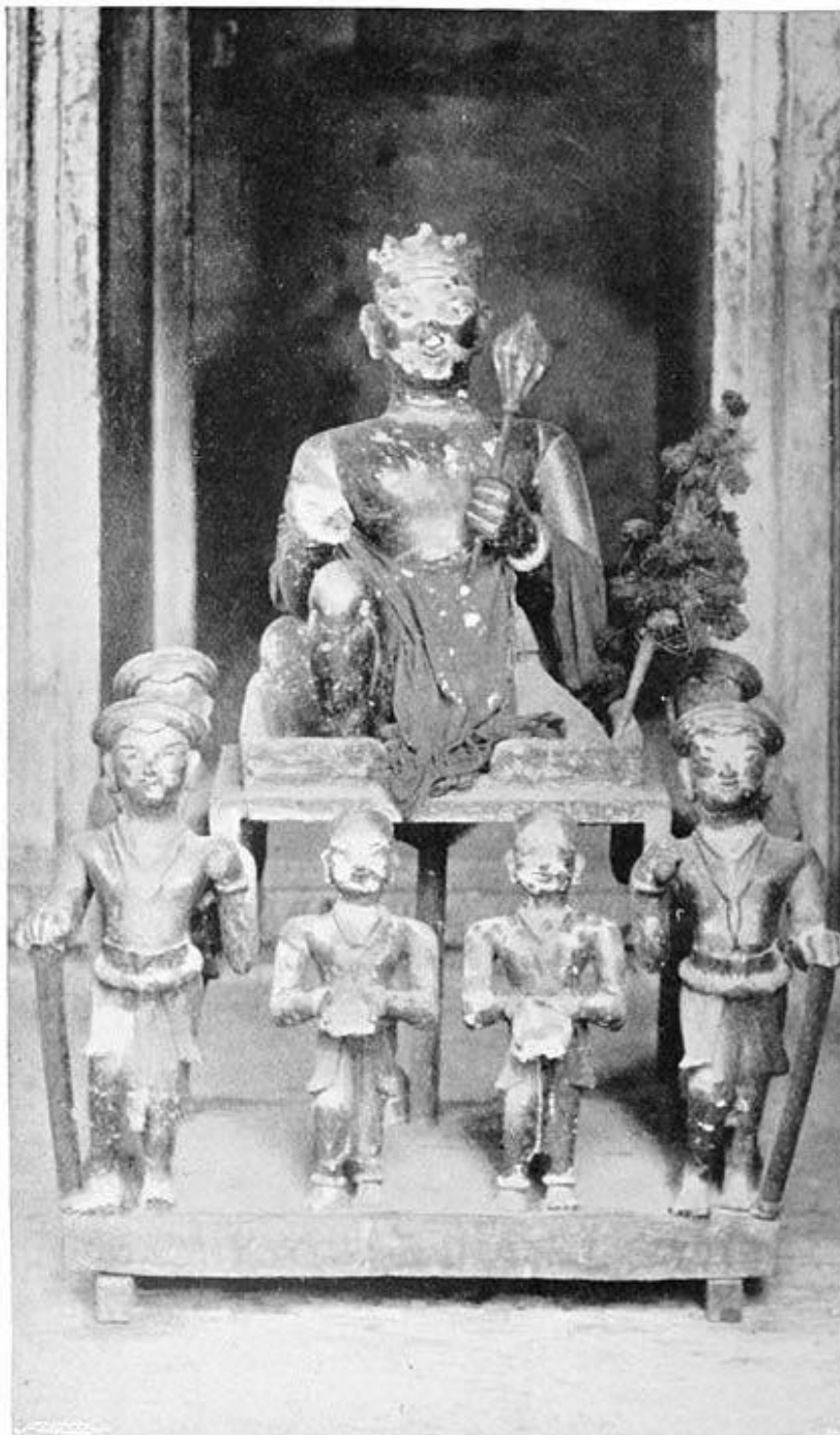
Hanuman and his priest, 1896



Hanuman as a warden, 1896



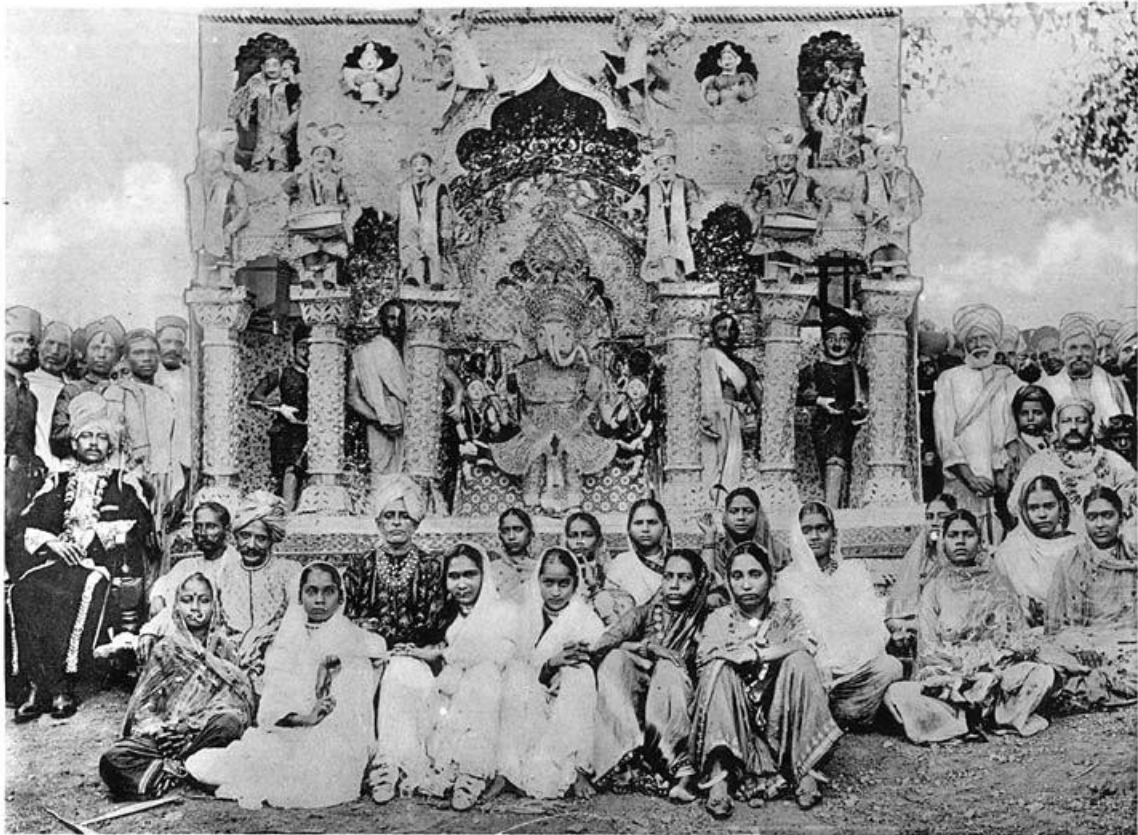
Siva and the Cobra, 1896



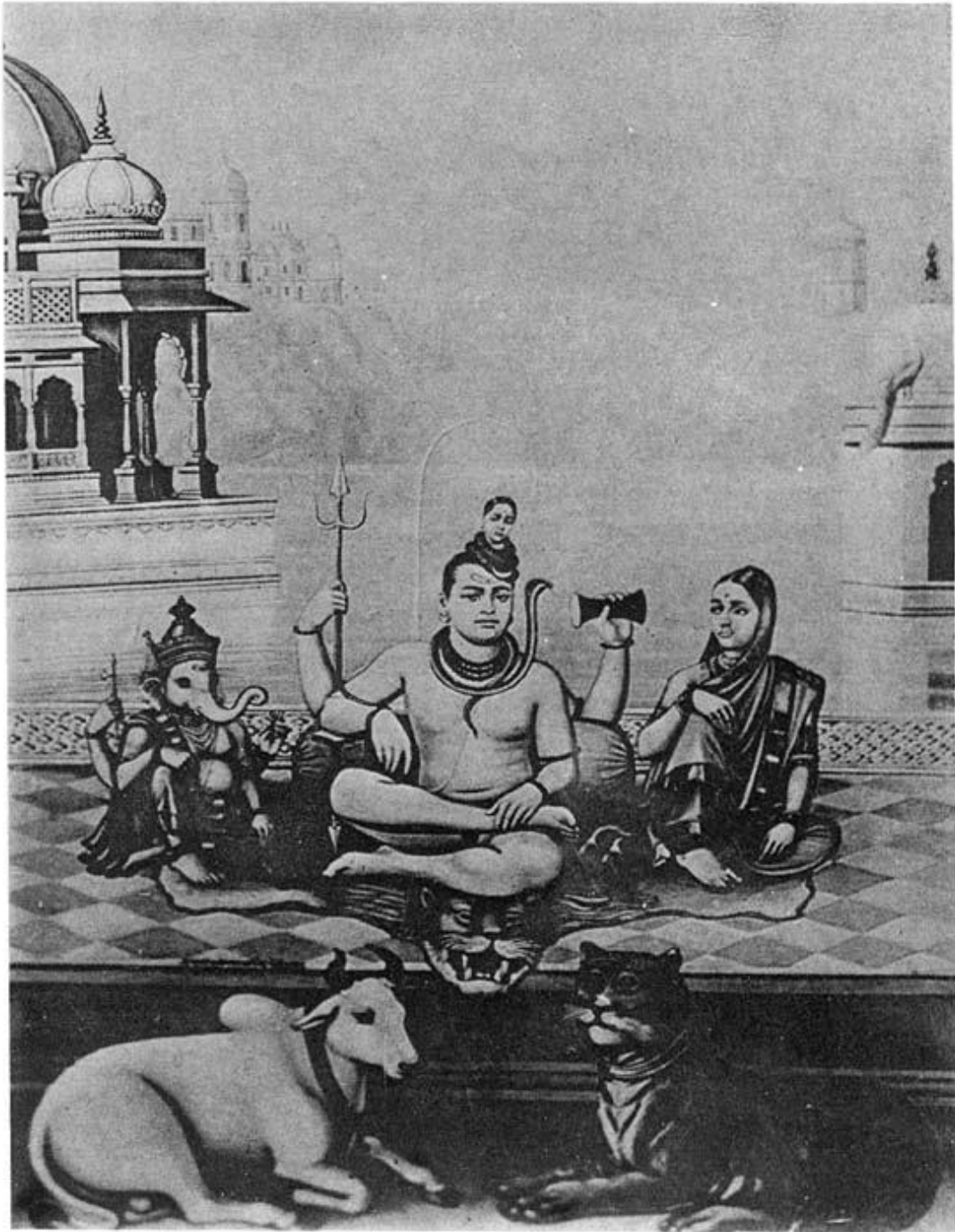
Yama, god of death, borne by his messengers, 1896



Image of the god Ganpati carried in procession, 1916



The elephant-headed god Ganpati, 1916



Images of Siva and his consort Devi, or Pārvati, with the bull and tiger, 1916

COLLATERAL DISCOVERIES PART THREE

By Bhakta John Jagannatha

In part three, I would like to present images found concerning the sacred Ganges.

The descriptions below each photo or painting are taken word for word from the books in which they were published. I will leave it up to the advanced devotees to determine their accuracy. I welcome any and all comments sent to johnstayhome@gmail.com



A BRAHMAN WORSHIPPING THE GANGES.

1888



HINDU CARRYING HOLY WATER FROM THE GANGES.

1888



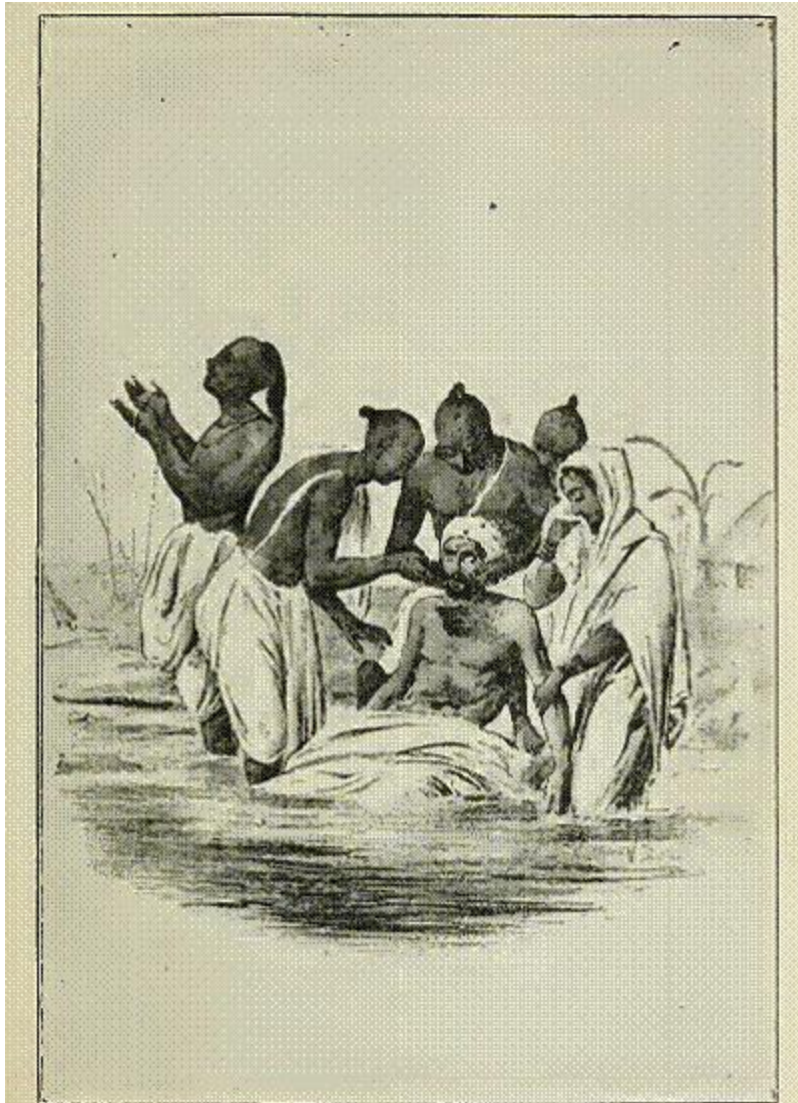
Bathing in the Ganges, Hardwar, 1896



Ganges water bearers, 1896

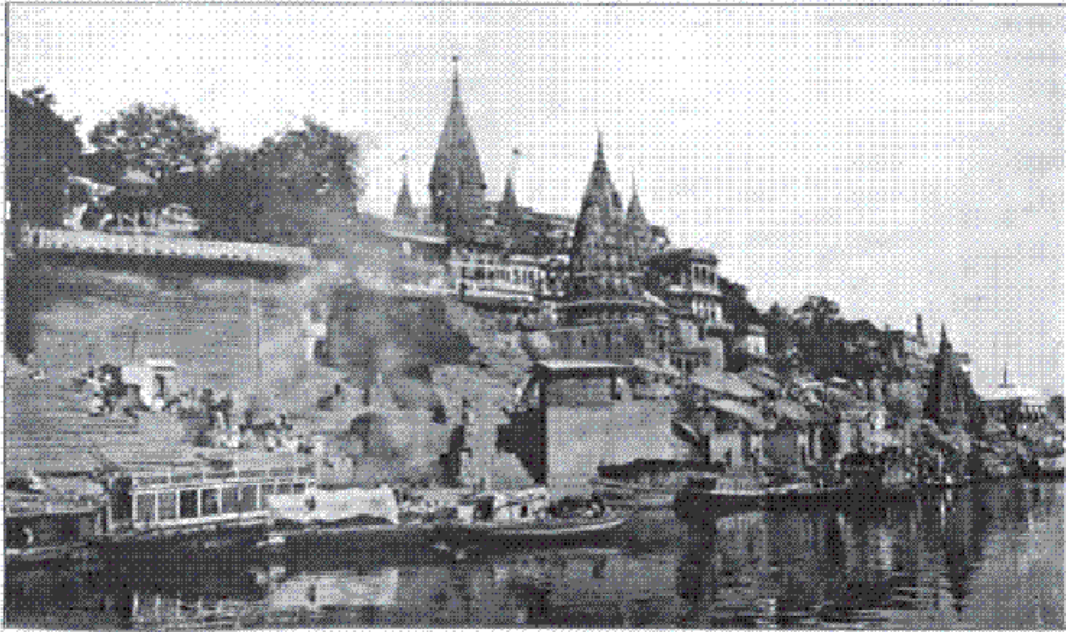


Image of Ganga Mai, 1896



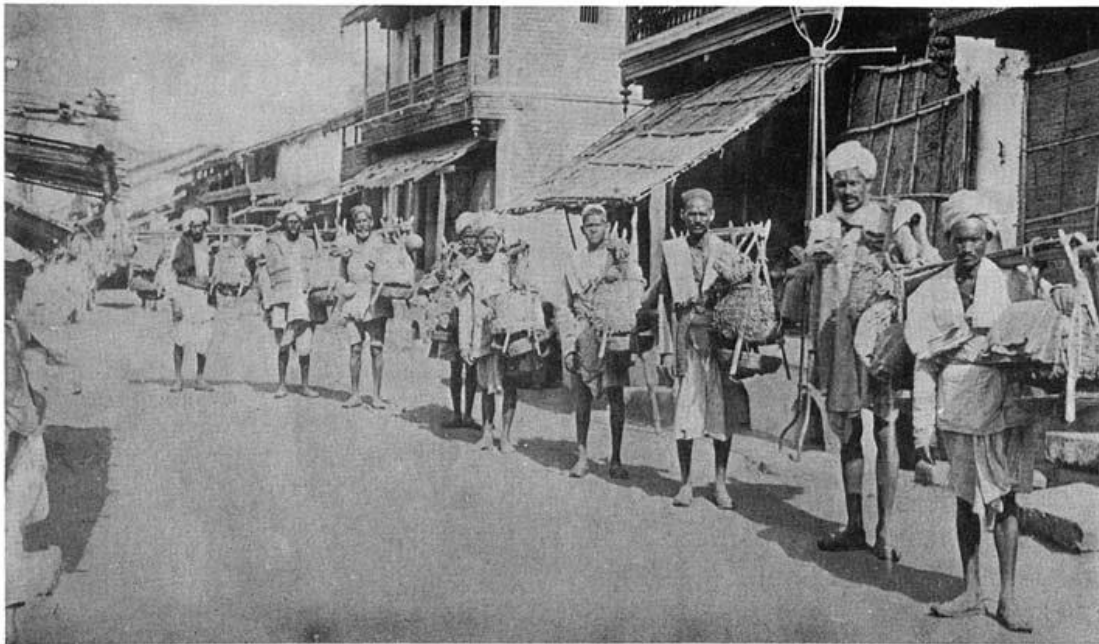
15.—DYING HINDU BROUGHT TO THE GANGES TO BREATHE HIS LAST
IN THE WATERS OF THE SACRED RIVER.—(MODERN CUSTOM.)

1902



WATER FRONT AT BENARES

1915



Pilgrims carrying Ganges water, 1916

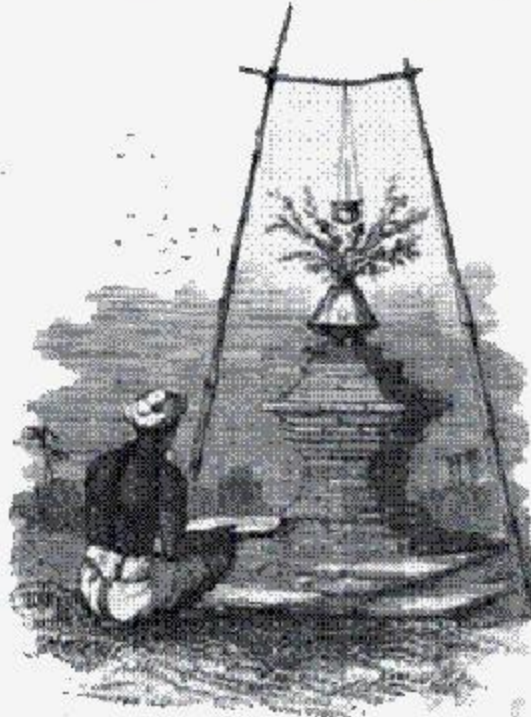
COLLATERAL DISCOVERIES PART FOUR

By Bhakta John Jagannatha

In part four, I would like to present images found of Vaisnava devotees.

The descriptions below each photo or painting are taken word for word from the books in which they were published. I will leave it up to the advanced devotees to determine their accuracy. I welcome any and all comments sent to johnstayhome@gmail.com

The Śālagrām is usually placed under a tulasi-tree, which is planted on the top of a pillar in the vicinity of a temple of Vishnu, or near a house. Tulasi, a female, desired to become Vishnu's wife, but was metamorphosed by Lakshmi into a tree, a small shrub, called therefore *Tulasi*, or holy basil (*Ocimum Sanctum*). Vishnu, however, promised to assume the form of a Śālagrām, and always continue with her. The Vaishnava priests, therefore, keep one leaf of the shrub under and another over the Śālagrām, and thus pay their adorations to the stone and the tree. In the evening a lamp is placed



near it. In the month of May it is watered from a pot suspended over it, as appears in the engraving, which represents a person engaged in the worship at this singular shrine.

The worship of Vishnu, which, as before intimated, is more prevalent than any other in India, is supposed to have existed at a period long anterior to the birth of Christ. There are some magnificent temples built to his honour in various parts of India. The celebrated temple of Jaganáth is dedicated to one of the forms of this divinity—to Krishna, as the lord of the world.

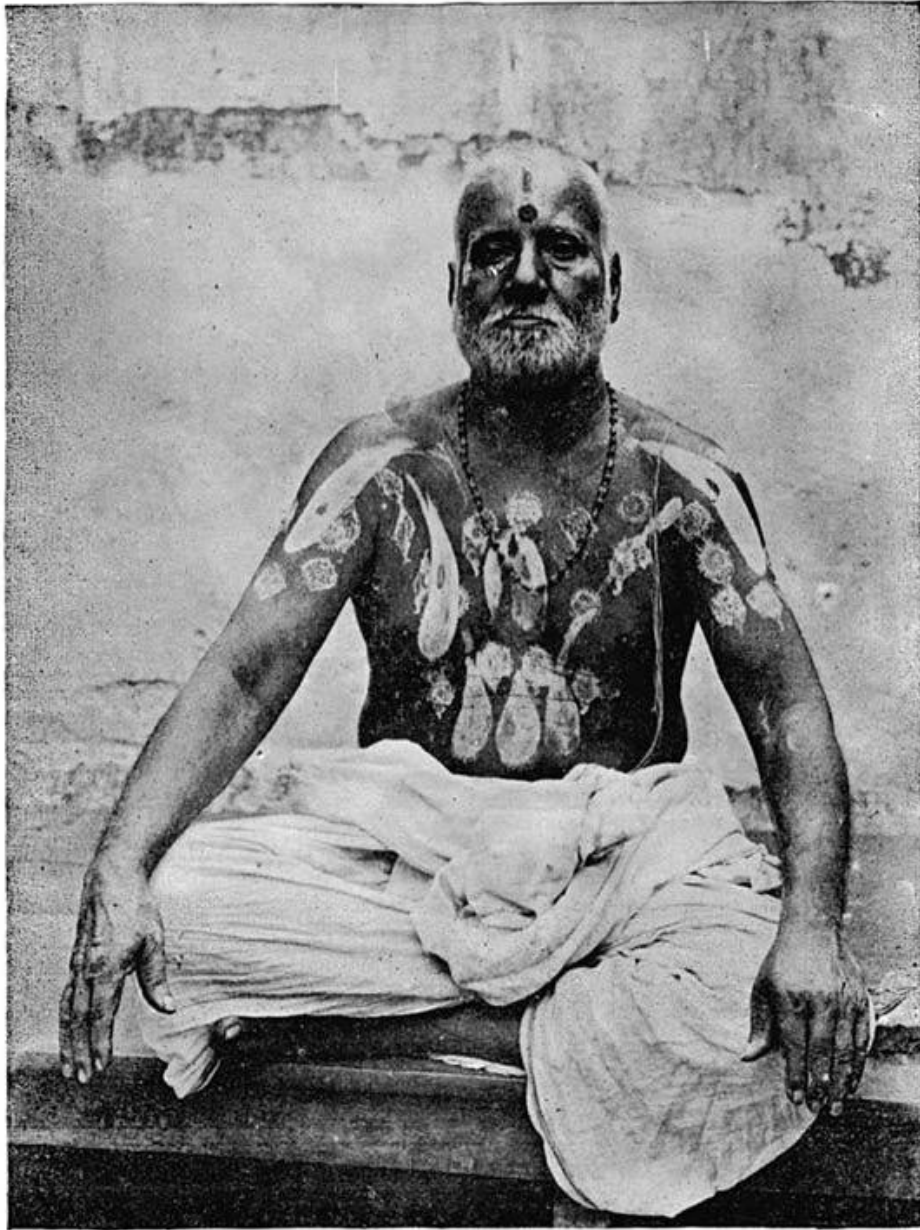
No bloody sacrifices are ever presented at the shrines of Vishnu. The offerings are fruit, flowers, milk, money, incense, the lamp wave-offering, food, &c. Prostration, called *Ashtānga*, so that the eight members of the body come into contact with the ground, and standing with the hands uplifted, in the posture of a slave, are required of the devotee: the eight members are the hands, breast, forehead, eyes, throat, and middle of the back; or the first four, with the knees and feet; or these six with words and mind.



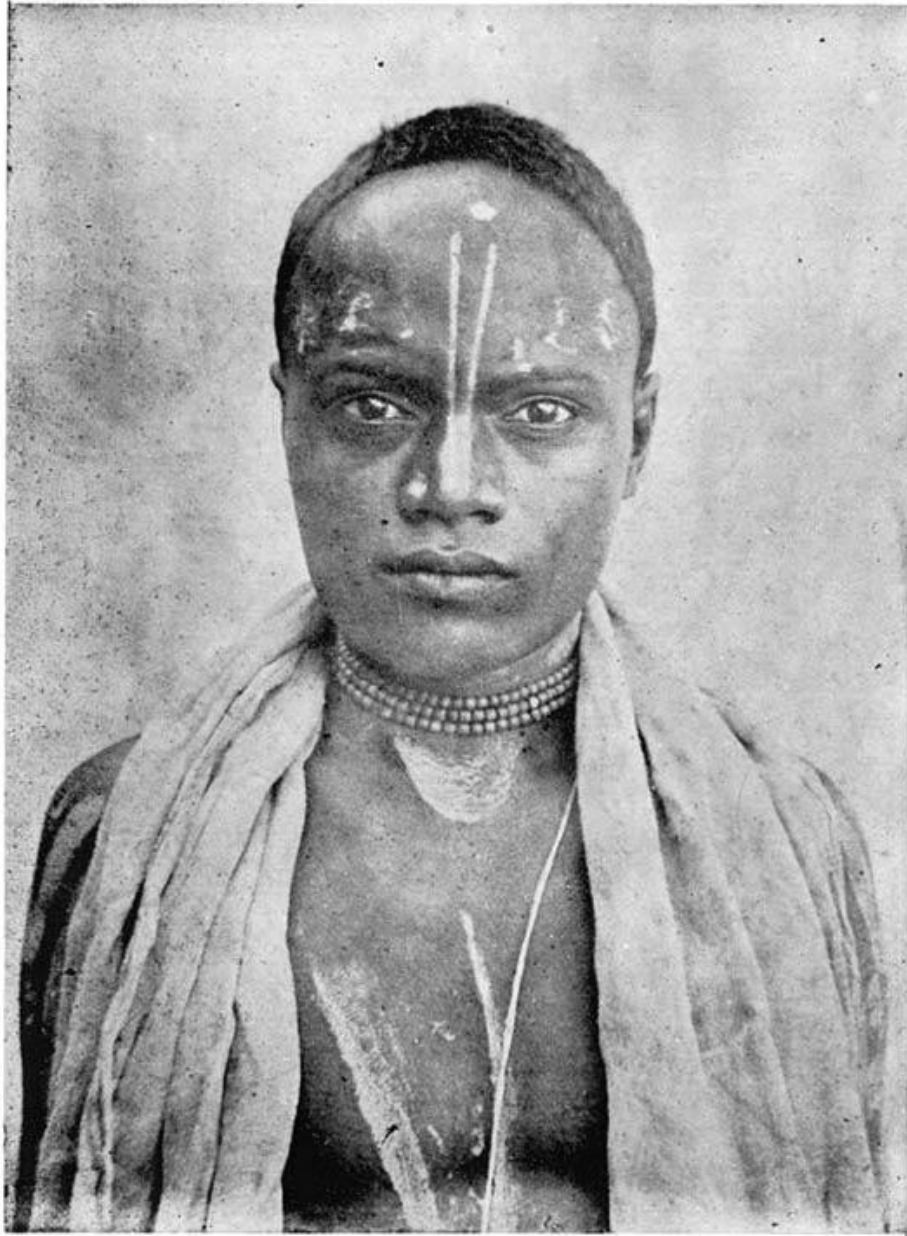


A PILGRIM CARRYING RELIGIOUS RELICS.

1891



Madhva Brahman, 1909



Oriya Brahman, 1909



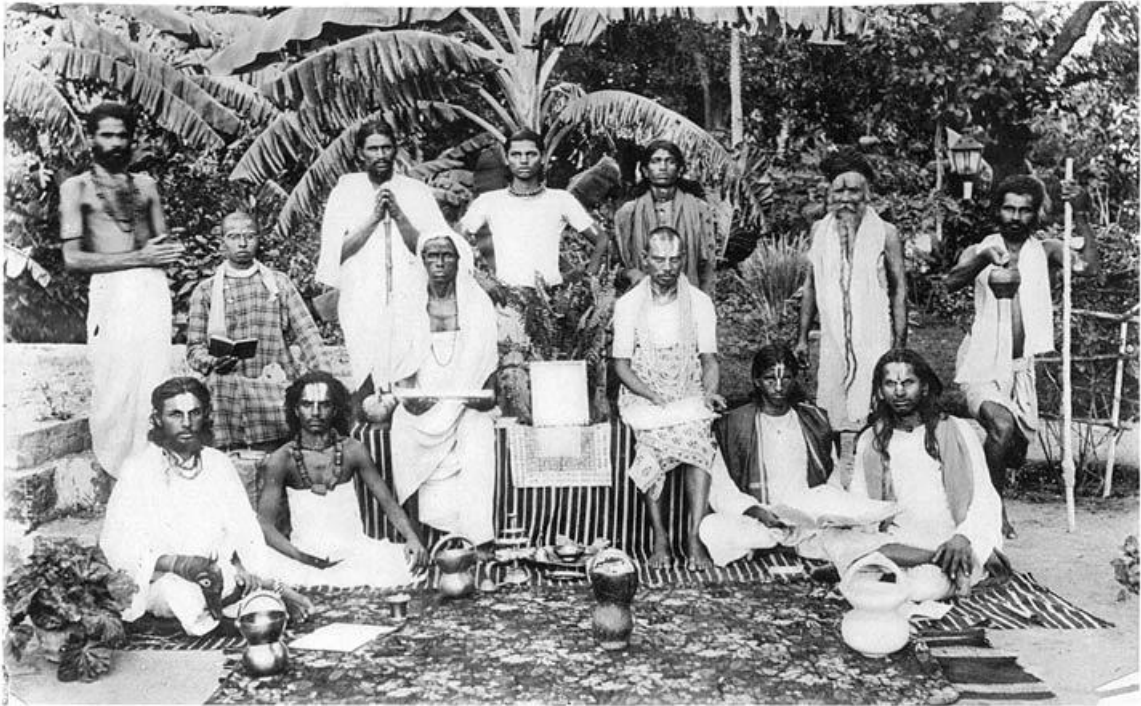
Patnukaran marriage procession, 1909



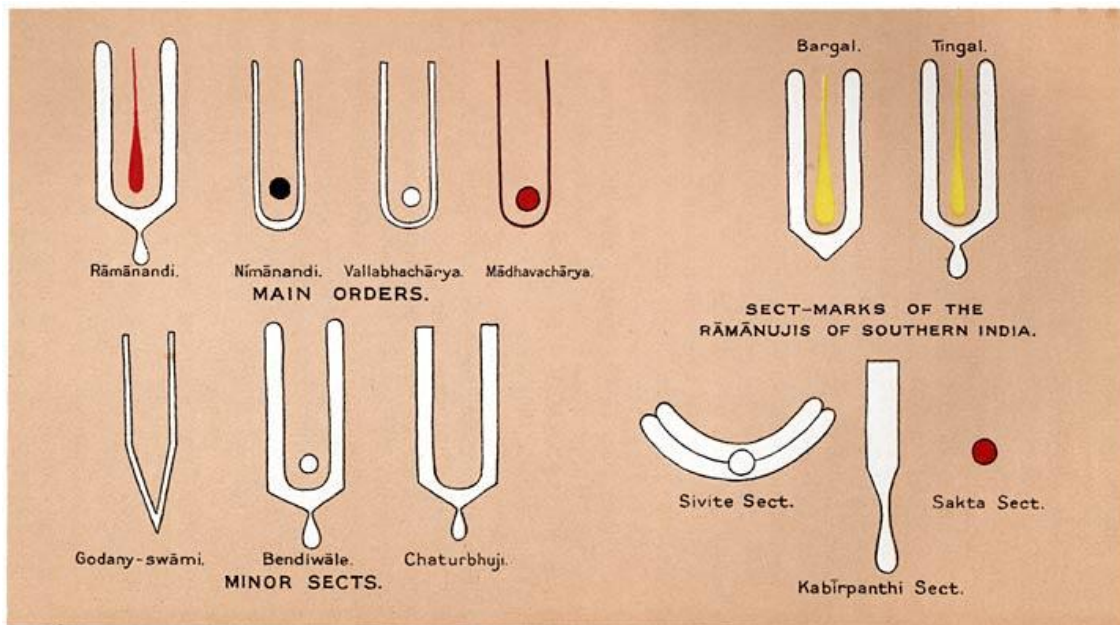
Sembadavan Mayana Kollai, 1909



Dasari religious mendicant with discus and conch-shell of Vishnu, 1916



Hindu mendicants with sect-marks, 1916



Examples of Tilaks or sect-marks worn on the forehead, 1916

MORE COLLATERAL DISCOVERIES – SIMPLE LIVING

By Bhakta John Jagannatha

While looking for all things Jagannatha and Jagannatha Puri in the books on India of the western world in the previous centuries, there were many photos and illustrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, in His many forms, which were collaterally discovered. In addition there were also many artistic and photographic depictions of the demigods and the devotees and their activities and I would like to present them for the pleasure of the Vaisnavas.

In this article are photos from publications of the early 20th century depicting the simple living activities of the residents of India presented in alphabetical order.

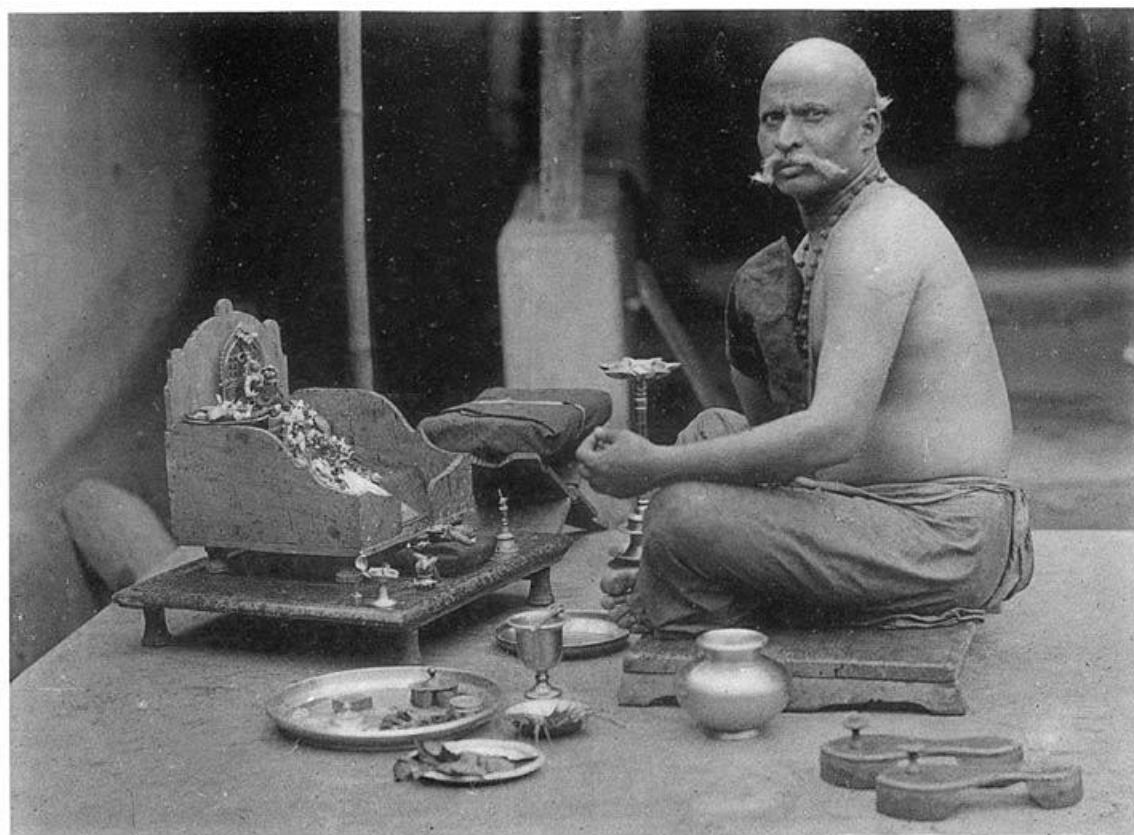
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Basors making baskets of bamboo.



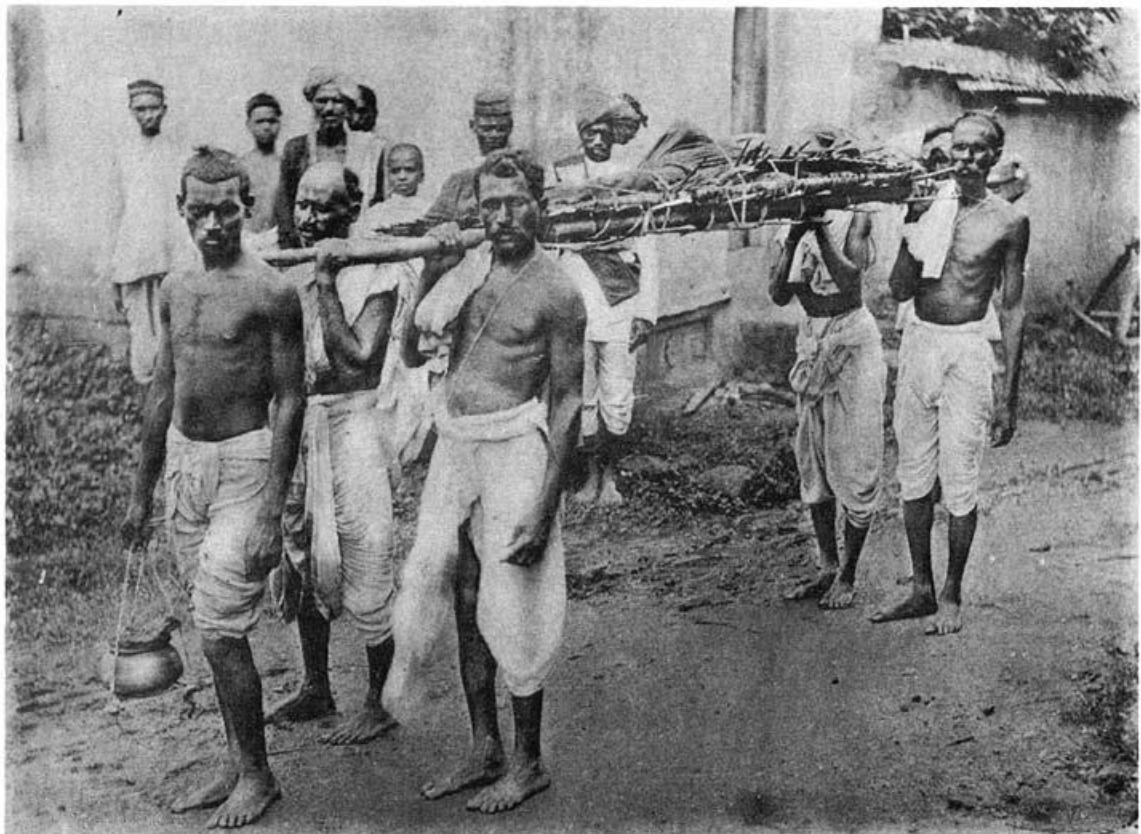
Brahman bathing party.



Brahman worshipping his household Gods.



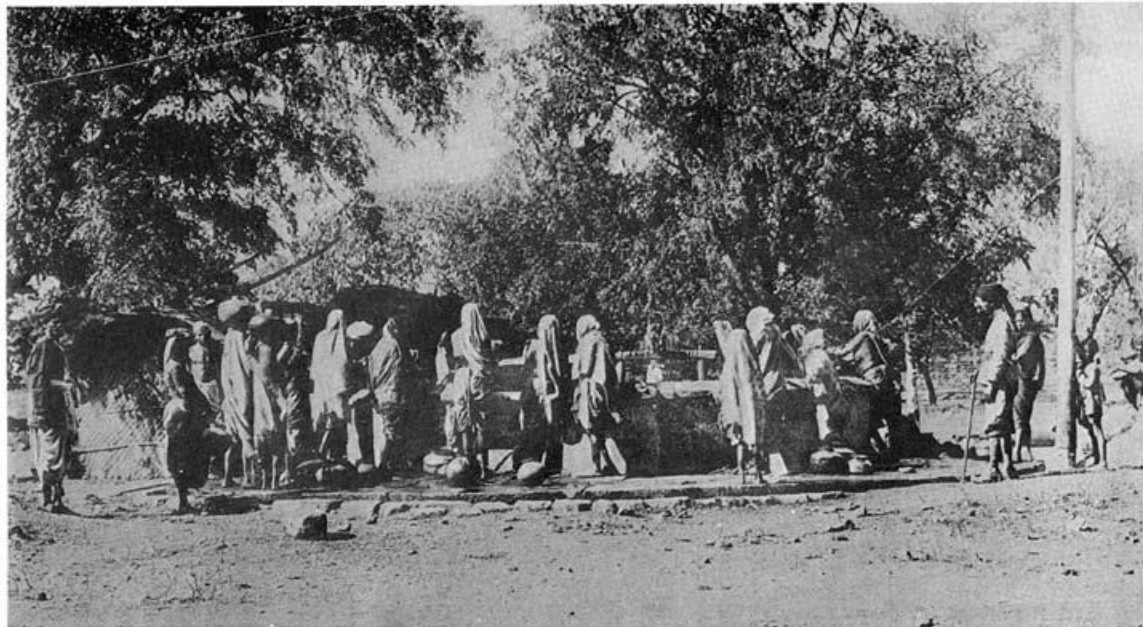
Bullocks drawing water with mot.



Carrying out the dead.



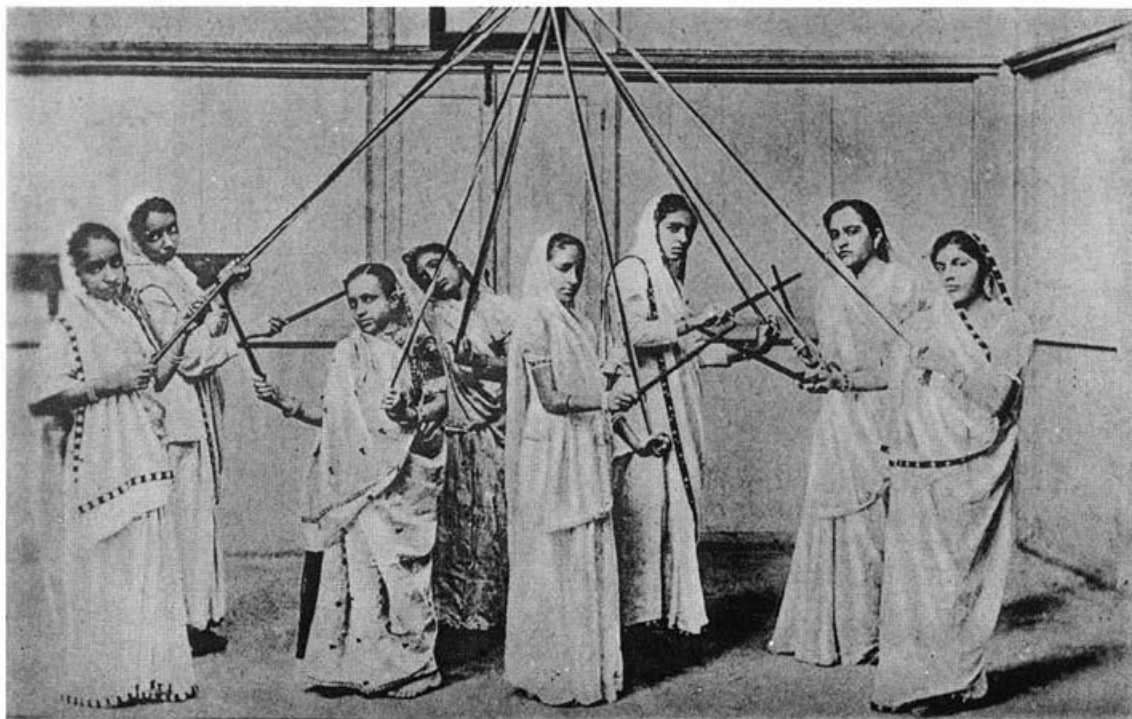
Chipa or calico-printer at work.



Drawing water from the village well.



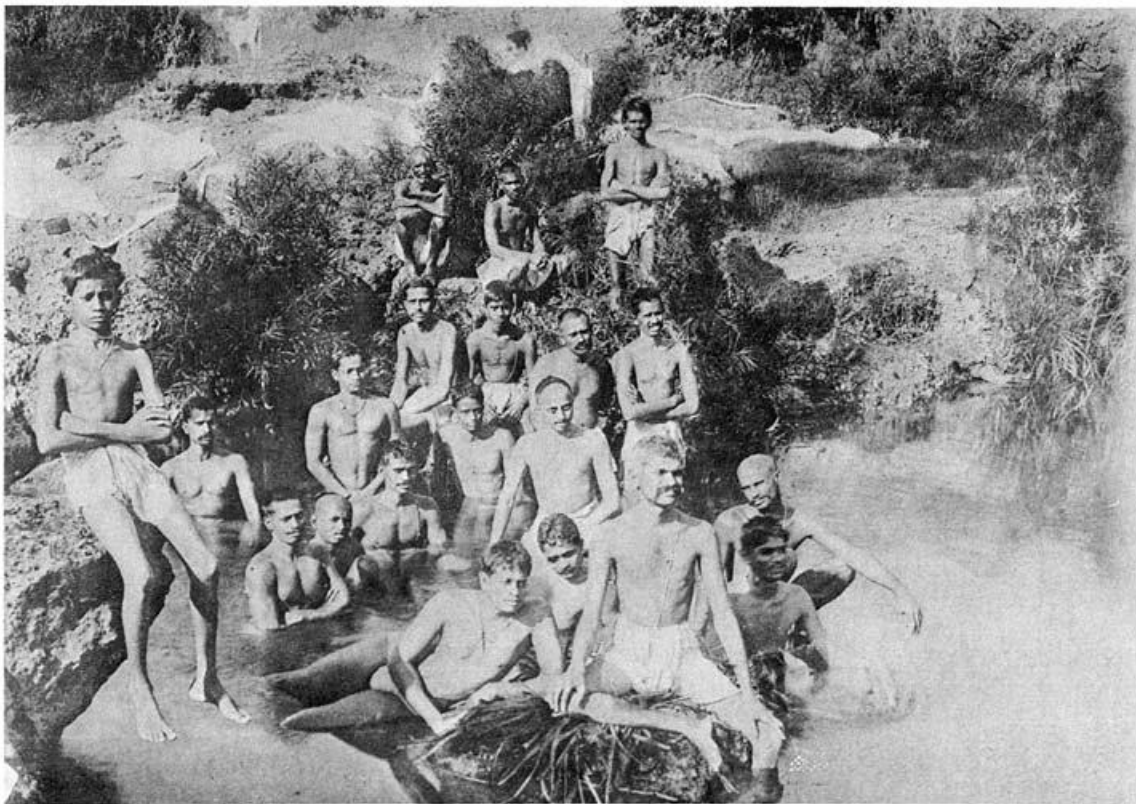
Gond women grinding corn.



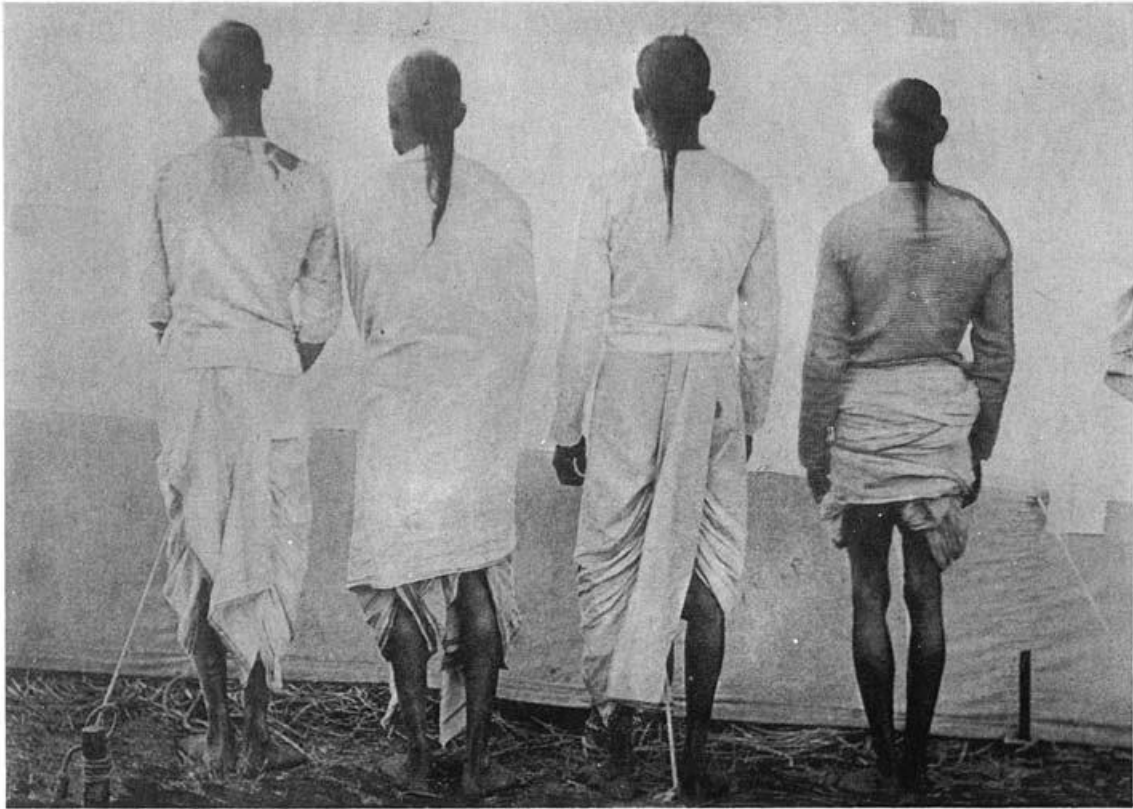
Gujarati girls doing figures with strings and sticks.



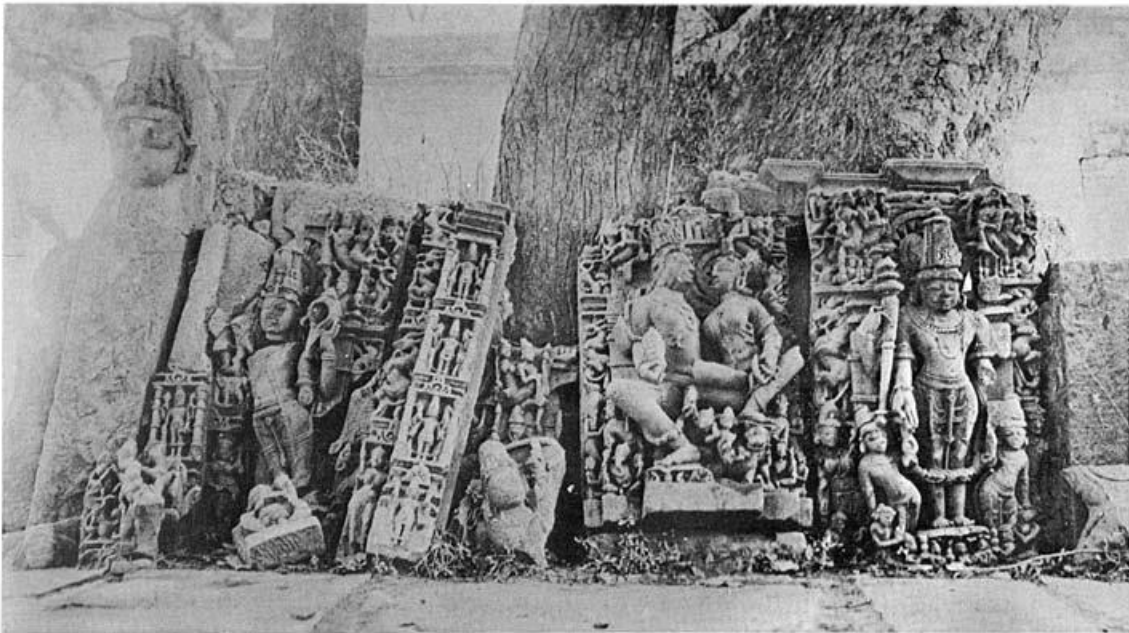
Halwai or confectioner's shop.



Hindu bathing party.



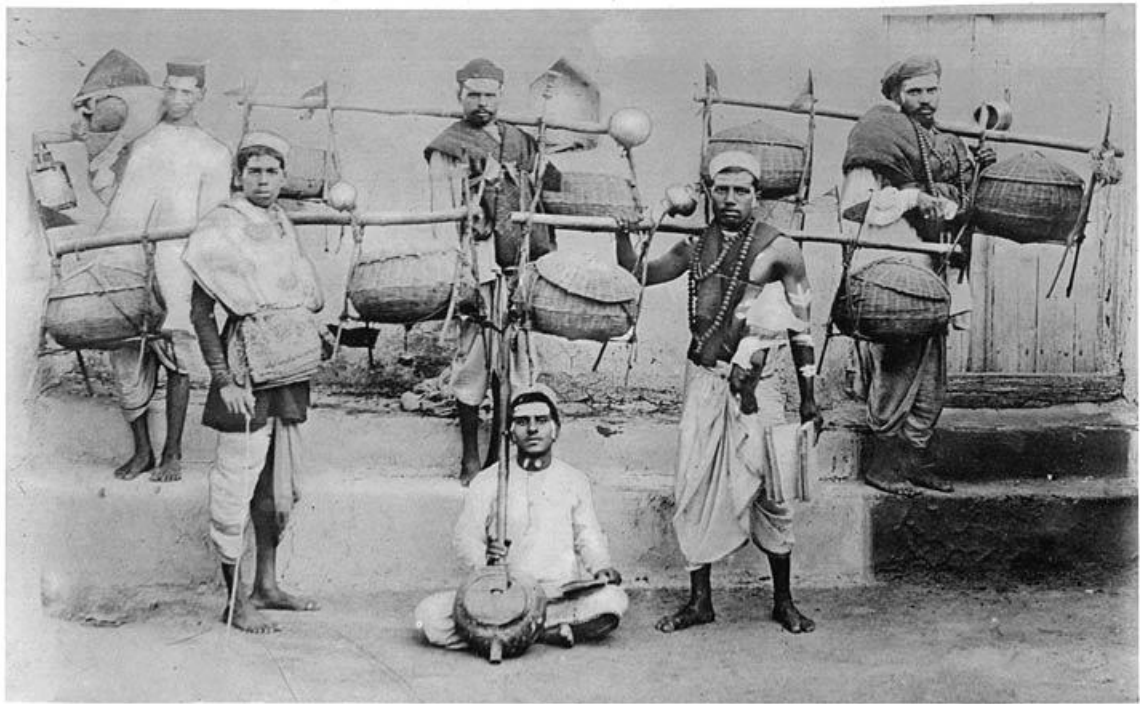
Hindu men showing the choti or scalp-lock.



Hindu sculptures.



Little girls playing.



Pilgrims carrying water of the river Nerbudda.



Pinjara cleaning cotton.



Ploughing with cows and buffaloes in Chattisgarh.



Potter and his wheel.



Pounding rice.



Sowing.



Teli's oil-press.



Threshing.



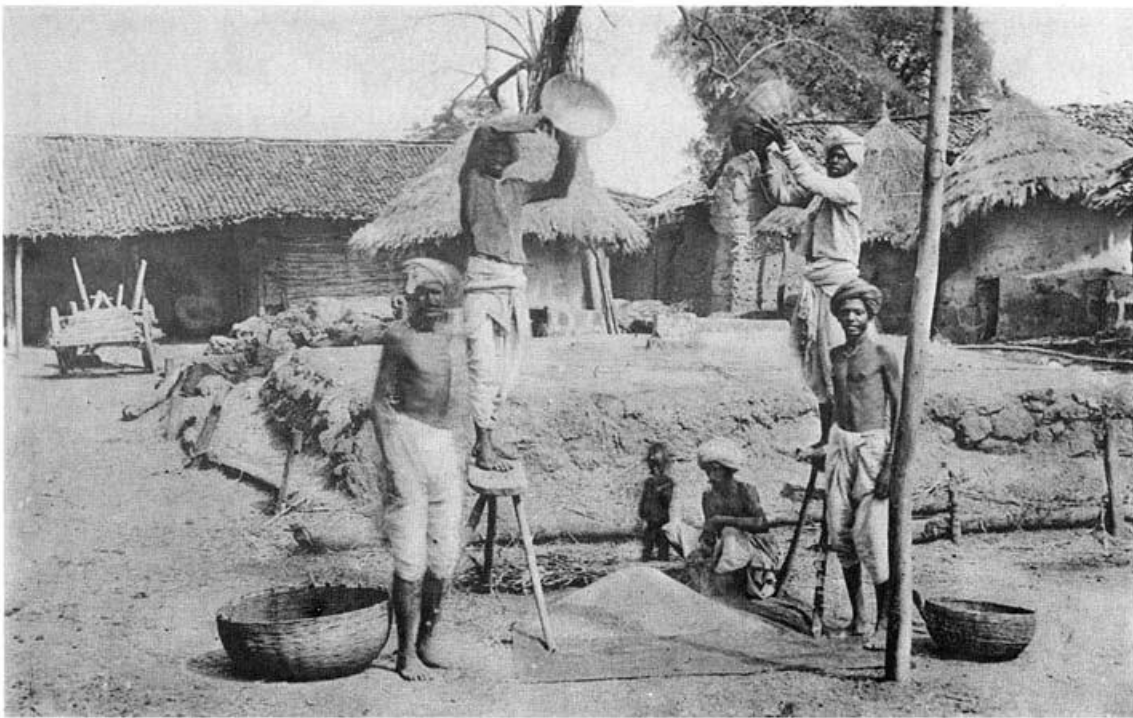
Transplanting rice.



Weaving sizing the warp.



Winding thread.



Winnowing.



Women grinding wheat and husking rice.

MORE WORDS FROM THE WEST ON LORD JAGANNATHA AND HIS TEMPLE
IN PURI, ORISSA, INDIA FROM THE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

By Bhakta John Jagannatha



Jagannatha deities circa 1900

EXCERPTS FROM
A CLASSICAL DICTIONARY OF HINDU MYTHOLOGY AND RELIGION,
GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, AND LITERATURE.
BY JOHN DOWSON, M.R.A.S.
LATE PROFESSOR OF HINDUSTANI, STAFF COLLEGE
LONDON: TRUBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL
1879

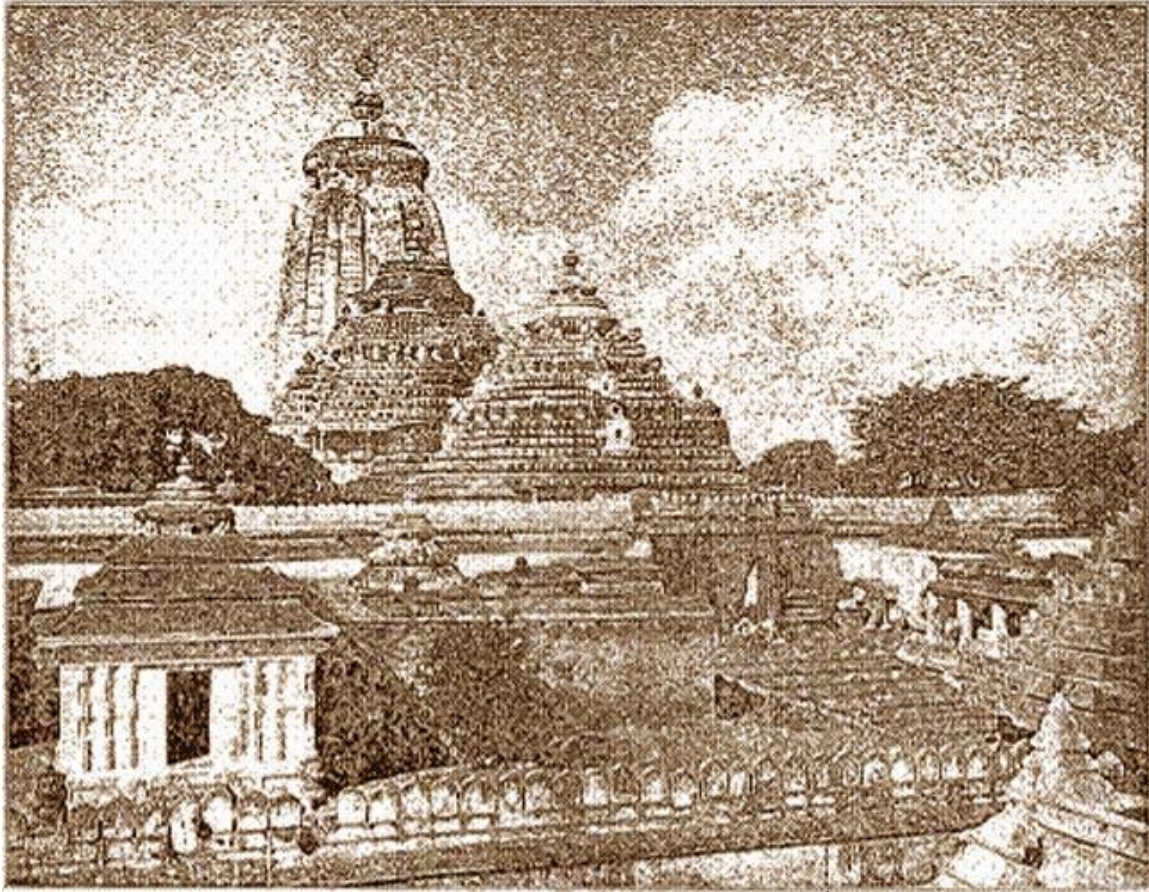
JAGAN-NATHA. 'Lord of the world.' A particular form of Vishnu, or rather of Krishna. He is worshipped in Bengal and other parts of India, but Puri, near the town of Cuttack, in Orissa, is the great seat of his worship, and multitudes of pilgrims resort thither from all parts, especially to the two great festivals of the Snana-yatra and Ratha-yatra, in the months of Jyaishta and Ashadha. The first of these is when the image is bathed, and in the second, or car festival, the image is brought out upon a car with the images of his brother Bala-rama and sister Su-bhadra, and is drawn by the devotees.

The legend of the origin of Jagan-natha is peculiar. A devout king named Indra-dyumna was directed by Vishnu to form an image of Jagan-natha. Viswa-karma, the architect of the gods, undertook to make the image, on condition of being left quite undisturbed till

the work was complete. After fifteen days the king was impatient and went to Viswakarma, who was angry, and left off work before he had made either hands or feet. Indradyumna prayed to Brahma, who promised to make the image famous, and he did so by acting as high priest at its consecration.

EXCERPTS FROM
XX CENTURY CYCLOPAEDIA
BIOGRAPHY, HISTORY, ART, SCIENCE AND GAZEETER OF THE WORLD
EDITED BY A.R. SPOFFORD AND CHARLES ANNANDALE, M.A., LL.D.
CHICAGO NEW YORK, E.R. DU MONT 1902

Jagannatha (jag-an-nat'ha: Skr. 'Lord of the World') often written Juggernaut, the name given to the Indian god Krishna, the eighth incarnation of Vishnu, and to a very celebrated idol of this deity in a temple specially dedicated to Jagannatha at Puri, a town in Orissa, on the Bay of Bengal. It is a very rudely-cut wooden image, having the face black, and the arms gilt; the mouth is open and red; the eyes are formed of precious stones. It is covered with magnificent vestments and seated upon a throne between two others - his brother Bala-Rama and his sister Subhadra. Great numbers of pilgrims, sometimes a hundred thousand, at the time of the festivals of Jagannatha, assemble from all quarters of India to pay their devotions at his shrine. On these occasions the idol is mounted on a huge car resting on sixteen wheels, which is drawn by the pilgrims.



The Temple of Jagannatha in Puri, Orissa, early 20th century

EXCERPTS FROM
FAITHS OF MAN
A CYCLOPAEDIA OF RELIGIONS
BY MAJOR GENERAL J.G.R. FORLONG
1906

JAGA-NAT. Sanskrit: "lord of creation," a title of Krishna, who is also Jaya-nat, "the conquering lord." His great shrine in Orissa has become world famous; and the region is called Utkala-desa, or the land that "effaces sin," being sacred for 20 miles round the shrine. Brahmans traverse all India to urge pilgrimage to this temple, where "the granter of all wishes," bestows offspring, and heals every ailment. To bathe in the sacred waters of Puri, and to pray on its sandy shores, is to obtain remission of the most dire sins. Fervent piety, human and divine love, have here been manifested by myriads of pilgrims.

The two chief festivals at the site are the Snana-yatra, or "bathing" of the god, in the end of May, and the Ratha-yatra or "car" festival in June, when the deity, accompanied by his brother Bala-rama and his sister Su-bhadra, is dragged in a huge car by hundreds of devotees, from his temple to one adjoining it, and back again. The Snana fete is a baptismal ceremony for the god and his worshipers, in preparation for the later ceremony.

The legend says that Vishnu directed the good king Indra-dyumna to make an image of Jaga-nat. Visva-Karma (or Hephaistos) undertook to make the image if left undisturbed, but after 15 days the king visited him before he had finished the hands and feet: he therefore left the image in this unfinished state, and Jaga-nat is now so represented; but Brahma consented to make it famous, and himself to act as priest at its consecration.

The shrine is very ancient, and caste distinctions are there ignored. All are equal in the eyes of the creator, and though Hindus there attempt to preserve caste at the fetes, all are supposed to eat from the same dish, and mingle freely during the hot nights when pilgrims lie in the open, on the sands, or in the low jungle scrub round the shrines.

In May and June 200,000 to 400,000 pilgrims assemble on the Puri river, and 3000 or 4000 priestly families minister to them, while probably as many missionaries are sent out all over India, in the spring months, urging the sick, the sorrowful, and the barren, to perform this pilgrimage. The area 650 square feet occupied by the shrine is specially sacred. A tower 184 feet high (28 feet square) covers the shrine where the three images stand. The shrines are all pyramidal, and older than 1200 A.C. They are covered with elaborate carving. At the entrance rises a basalt block 35 feet high, with 16 faces, highly ornamented and set on a pedestal - this being the lingam of the site in front of the ark or shrine; as the pillar of Zeus stood before the symbolic cave of Delphi. Various statues surround this pillar, in the quadrangle which includes the shrines. These represent heroes of the Mahabharata and Ramayana epics. Similar car rites belong to all temples of Jaga-nat in every part of India.

HINDU – A TERM ORIGINATING FROM OUTSIDE OF INDIA

By Bhakta John Jagannatha



A HINDU SAINT.

Illustration circa 1888

The following is a short excerpt from an encyclopedia of 1885 in which the author presents proofs that the word Hindu originates from outside of the subcontinent of India to describe the inhabitants therein.

HINDU is the ordinary name by which the idol-worshipping people of British India are at present known, but the term is only of recent use. The races to whom it is applied are only now fusing, under the firm rule of the British, and never, hitherto, could have had one common designation.

Bharata or Bharatavart'ha is an ancient Sanskrit name for part of the countries which Europeans include in the term India. Hindu for the people, and Hindustan for the country, now so generally applied by natives as well as foreigners, are possibly of Persian or W. Aryan origin, and may have relation to the seven rivers of the Panjab, the Sabp'ta-Sindhu, which the Aryans met with in their course to the south, the river Indus being still known as the Sindhu or Sind'h (Hitopadesa, p.333).

With the Persians, Ind or Hind and Hindu, as synonymous with black, has long been applied to the dark-coloured populations in the territories which are now comprised in British India. The Arab, the Persian, the Afghan, and Sikh, when speaking of the people of India, only call them 'black men'; and even in India the Mahomedan descendants of the Arab, Persian, Moghul, and Afghan conquerors use the same designation. 'Kala Admi', literally black man, is ever in their mouths; and Hindus themselves, in their various tongues, likewise so distinguish themselves from all the fair foreigners amongst them.

The African races, who were formerly brought to India as the household slaves or guards of native princes, invariably, when alluding to such of their own people as are born in the country, style them Hindi; and the Hindu merchants trafficking throughout Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia, are known to the people as Hindiki. Therefore, though a large part of the idol-worshipping people now-a-days call themselves Hindu, in this they are merely following the names given to them by their Arab, Persian, Afghan, Turk, Moghul, Tartar, and British rulers.

Even Europeans have only of late habitually used this term, for at the beginning of the 19th century Gentoo was the everyday name employed, though it has since gradually fallen into disuse. It, also, was derived from a foreign people, the Portuguese, and was applied to the idol-worshippers, like the Gens of the Romans and Gentile of the Scriptures. It never, perhaps, reached much beyond the seaport towns, and if the better educated amongst the natives ever employed it, their doing so was merely in imitation of Europeans. And now, too, similarly, Brahmans and others, when alluding to the Teling race of their own countrymen, like wise style them Hindus.

Hindu is thus almost entirely a European conventional term, and does not represent a nation, a race, or a religion.

THE CYCLOPAEDIA OF INDIA
AND OF EASTERN AND SOUTHERN ASIA
THIRD EDITION 1885
By Surgeon General Edward Balfour
Fellow of the Madras University